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we believe
that God who
is perfectly
merciful and
just sent
his Son to
assume that
nature in
which the dis-
obedience was
committed to
make satis-
faction in the
same and to
bear the pun-
ishment of
sin, has laid
our iniquities
upon him and
poured out his
mercy and
goodness on
us that through
him we might
get life eter-
nal.

Belgic
Confession
1561 A.D.

GLORIA
IN EX-
CELSIS
DEO

THE GOAT SHALL BEAR THEIR INIQUITIES UPON HIM TO A SOLITARY LAND



LEVITICUS 16:22

Leight

Viewpoint

Christmas — God's disturbing totality

by Louis Tamminga

★ There is something very sweeping, very total about Christianity. Sin took mankind out of God's orbit sending them off into the dark void of forsakenness. But God's almighty arm reached out and intercepted mankind from this disastrous journey.

The Gospel pictures the reclaiming process in bold strokes. The cost was exorbitant. The Son of God laid aside His glory, took upon Himself our flesh and gave Himself to be humbled unto death (Philippians 2). He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and presented the redeemed to the Father (Hebrews 2), a new family, totally Church.

Shall we celebrate Christmas?

Yes, let us!

But remember, the Christmas event stands for the totality of God's work, and the totality of our response. Christmas leads to Easter, which leads to the Ascension, which leads to Pentecost, the Spirit taking up residence in our hearts, through Him Christ in us, we in Him (Galatians 2). So we accept the implications of Romans 12:1 and say with one fellow-believer, "Lord, I give you my hands, my limbs, my eyes, my brain, all that I am, all that I have, I hand it over to you, to live in it the life you please. You may send this body to Africa, or lay it on a bed with cancer, or

delegate it to spell out your demands of righteousness and goodness."

That's what Christmas celebration leads to. It is that total. Christmas is Immanuel, God with us. Imagine going through the day next to God, closer still: God the Spirit in us. Nothing less than total surrender will do.

Unimaginable!

Glorious!

But frightening, too.

Yes, because if our relationship to God is that big then it embraces all our daily relationships. O, the height and the breadth of God's all embracing grace!

Celebrating Christ's birth means that all relationships, both vertical and horizontal, belong to Him. My morning prayers bless my neighbour's day.

What world, what service?

Thinking of the road of total servanthood we must see one formidable roadblock that is peculiar to those post-Vietnam years. This obstacle might be called sensible selective retrenchment.

Here's how it works.

We find the world's problems too big, too painful to tackle, so we accept a modest substitute of doing incidental good. From the safety of our personal harbour we make limited raids into enemy territory and score little victories. In itself very commendable but in the long run we grow blind to the enemy's over-all strategy, and a mind set

begins to take over among Christians. We fail to see the larger issues in our civilization and hope that the forces of evil will go away. But they don't. In fact, they continue to influence our own daily lives, and especially affect our children.

Let me mention two examples taken at random.

The Russian writer Kirill Gradov fled from Russia to Western Europe and told journalists of the initial elation of freedom, safety, and availability of food. But slowly the void took over. "There is no community," writes Gradov, "that is deeply concerned about the horrible dilemmas mankind faces, only some individuals really care. The prevailing public values of Western society are all directed toward economic profit. I stood before the Notre Dame in Paris, and suddenly felt old and useless."

Where do we personally fit in?

What will be the vision of our children? Did we escape in sensible selective retrenchment?

Another example.

The great British missionary Leslie Newbigin, for many years bishop of the Church of South India, now living in retirement in England, was asked what he considered the greatest issue in today's missions. His answer came as a surprise. He stated that for years Western Christianity failed to question the basic humanistic assumptions of Western life. In fact, said he, British and American Christians are not distinguishable from people who have no

Christ; they accepted Western materialistic culture as their going life-style.

How can Christianity bring God's Word of judgment upon a culture when it has identified itself with that culture? Addressing North American Christianity, the bishop asked, "Will the churches on the other side of the water be regarded as centres of Un-American activities?"

A third example comes from the Far East.

The new secretary of National Christian Council of Japan, Dr. Shoji Tsutomu, made a journey last year visiting churches in Taiwan, the Philippines, and South Korea. He testified to the oppression church leaders suffered when they protested political imprisonment and the exploitation of the poor. And he implicated his own country, Japan, which profits economically from the prevailing order in those countries.

Yes, of course, we must not be weary of personal well-doing, near and far. But to sing with the angels in Ephrata's fields, "Peace on earth and mercy mild," means to see the great issues of our age: Christianization of neighbourhoods and nations, justice and freedom for the oppressed and exploited, food and opportunities for the hungry, responsible use of human and material resources, and war and peace.

Christmas celebration sharpens those visions. The Lord of Christmas won't have it any other way. It is that big, that total.

The secular and the sacred

by Henry Wildeboer

★ Christmas is coming and that excites all of us in one way or another. I surely do not desire to be a spoiler but its time to know the origin of the Christmas celebrations.



In the third century AD, Constantine, the Roman emperor, was converted and became a Christian. This caused great joy for the church since he decreed Christianity to now be the religion of the empire. Thus the church could come out of its hiding and go open and public, and the public was urged to become Christian. Thousands, to the delight of Constantine, did.

However, problems developed. "What do we do with all our earlier gods and all our great feasts and celebrations, especially the winter solstice and spring equinox?" Before the mass conversions, the entire empire lustily celebrated these great occasions. Many were simply unwilling and unprepared to give up these long hallowed events. For the "unconverted converts" it did not take long to find a solution incorporating the best of both.

In response to this restlessness, Constantine declared two major religious holidays corresponding exactly to the dates of the earlier pagan celebrations. December 25, celebrated as Saturnalia (the birthday of the sun) became the birthday of the Son (Christ). A great mass would be held in honour of Christ, thus Christ - mas. He also made the old holiday (the spring equinox) to become the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The old party worshipped the goddess of fertility (from which we

likely inherited our Easter bunny).

And the people quit grumbling. They had a Christian faith and they could continue their celebrations - the best of both worlds.

Very frankly, I am afraid things haven't changed much, even in His church. Is there really any doubt as to what God thinks of our syncretistic (look that one up in the dictionary!) celebrations? It's time for firm action as we approach the season and as the Christmas "pornography" again floods our homes (- various ads via TV, papers and pamphlets that make us and our children lustful and greedy for more and more. If we throw out dirty pictures that make us lust why not the same for glossy pictures and seductive descriptions that make us greedy??) Let's call it for what it is!

In the meantime, God loved so much His broken world that He gave His Son for life and celebration. Let's stop the fairy tales (Santa) and the funny games and recognize that we live in a hungry world that suffers huge injustices some of which is due to the fact that we have so much and share so little. Surely, the meaning of love and giving can be better learned than buying goodies for each other that no one needs. Here, too, deep spiritual creativity is needed.

May we have a pure and genuine celebration of the birth of Christ.

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The pigeons

by Ineke Parlevliet

She almost missed the exit lane. Quickly she swerved to the right, cutting off the driver behind her who honked his horn in one long, protesting wail. That's all I need, Jean thought, a traffic ticket or accident.

The morning traffic was heavy in the rush hour, even more than usual because at last the count-down of left-over shopping days before Christmas had reached number one.

"Better concentrate on the traffic," Jean told herself.

Although she knew the route by heart, she could easily go wrong in this hectic city. How often had she made this trip? Close to a hundred times, for sure. First only three times a week, then every weekday and lately even on the week-ends in her spare time. Officially Milly should've taken over on her days off, but she had not wanted that.

Joshua needed her. Or did she need Joshua? Jean sighed. Soon she had to miss him anyhow. How much longer could he last? Three days? One? Who knew? Would he have lived longer if he had been hospitalized; if she had not forced Dr. Bard to give in to her demands? She felt a pang of guilt. She had taken matters into her own hands. Now she had to bear the consequences, live with it, right or wrong. If she...

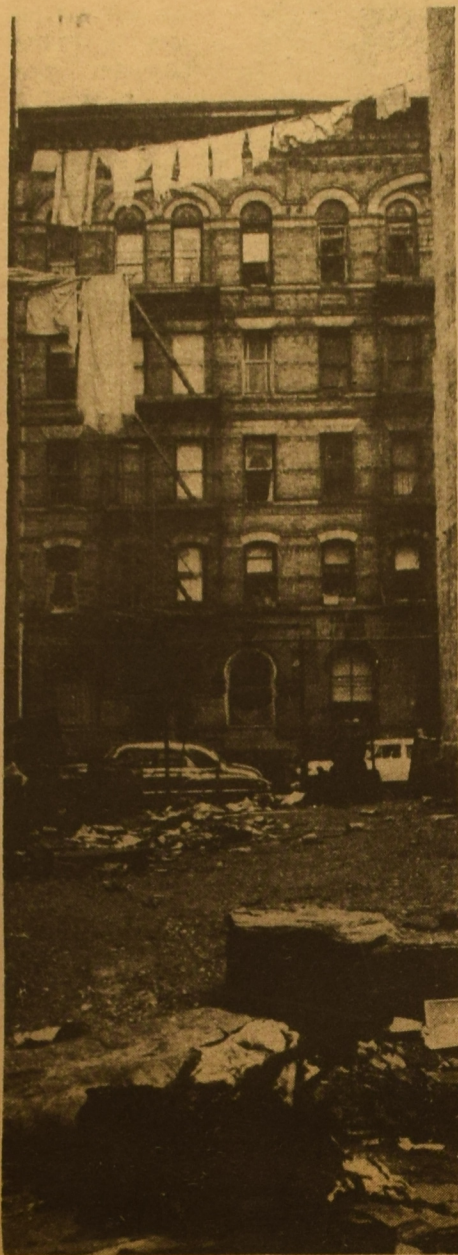
The light in front of her changed to red. She quickly pushed the gas pedal and the car shot through the intersection like a flying arrow, setting horns of motorists into action. Jean straightened her back. "Get with it, kid," she said aloud. "Keep your eyes on the road." She forced herself to stop the whirling kaleidoscope of thoughts and questions in her mind, which refused to fall into a unified pattern of clear-cut answers.

At last she left the main road and headed for one of the narrow streets in the black slum area. She drove carefully. The scene was always the same. Dirty, screaming children playing in the streets, lanky youths leaning idly against door posts, smoking cigarettes and pot and drunks sitting on the pavement with wide-spread legs and lolling heads.

Jean parked her car in front of the dilapidated building where Joshua, her fourteen-year-old patient, lived. With difficulty she heaved herself out of the Volkswagen, her bulky torso reluctantly obeying her arthritic legs. This bone-chilling winter weather! And that dark-grey sky forecasted snow. The worst was to come yet! And this was only the beginning of winter.

She struggled to haul her heavy canvas bag from the seat and after carefully locking the car doors, she went through the dark gap in the wall where a long, steep flight of stairs led to an open hallway where four doors gave entrance to four small apartments. Slowly she started to climb the filthy stairs, resting every few steps to catch her breath and to ease her aching legs.

If only one of those loitering kids would get a broom and do some sweeping, she thought annoyed, when she picked her way among the accumulation of litter: Pages of mucky newspapers, empty cigarette packs, candy wrappers, dog dung, beer cans, pop and wine bottles and what not. Just in time she noticed a puddle of vomit and hastily she stepped around it, suppressing a feeling of nausea as the sight was an affront to her



sensitive stomach, which once could take quite a bit more abuse. Another sign of old age, she thought with bitterness.

Six more years to go before she would retire. If she made it. She'd better. What was she going to do with her time when her working days were over? Knitting scarves for church bazaars? That would be the day, she thought cynically. She had never knitted one stitch in her whole life!

Crazy as it was, she really had no hobbies at all. Her work had always been her only interest, and still was, although, even the nursing profession was losing its appeal, now that patients had become numbers and cases.

She had always been a good nurse. But that was all she had accomplished in life. As a woman she had utterly failed. No husband, no kid, no feminine pursuits and she was as plain and shapeless as a bag of cement. And that's how she felt, too. A dead weight of aching bones and worries.

With a sigh of relief she reached the end of the stairs and put her bag down on the grimy landing. Her heart was pounding in her ears and she waited a few minutes to catch her breath. A penetrating stench of cooked cabbage, mingled with odours which were harder to label, seemed to ooze from every pore of the cracked and crumbling plastered walls. Foul four-lettered words, written with lipstick in various shades of red, resembled bleeding wounds and covered parts of the walls. The small window was so dirty that it blocked most of the daylight and the unpleasant, dim atmosphere always gave her the creepy feeling that someone was sneaking up to her back with a switchblade in his hands.

She quickly knocked on one of the paintless doors and picked up her

heavy bag. As usual the door was opened right away. A big, haggard-looking woman stood in the doorway, a toddler clinging to her stained and faded dress.

"Oh, nurse... Ah'm mighty glad you iz here. He ain't no good; my Joshua, ain't no good et oll... He'z coughin' a lot an' hot as burnin' coals. Ah doan't kno' how long...", her voice suddenly broke and her dark eyes filled with tears.

"I'll go upstairs right away then," Jean said.

Mrs. Stewart nodded with relief. Jean noticed it. Poor soul, she thought. Can't do a darned thing for him. Wish I could. Can't imagine what life would be like without Joshua. Why do I love him that much? The question had been nagging her for weeks. Why in the world did she get so involved with a patient? She certainly wasn't the sentimental type.

Even Bard, her arch enemy, would agree to that. Even he had admitted that she was the most efficient and level-headed nurse on his staff. Why then did she care so much about a young, black kid whom she had only known for six or seven months? The fact that she knew that she was losing him made her heart ache. Yet from the beginning she had known that he was beyond help. Bard had known it, too. In that respect they had at least agreed with each other.

Why did she care that much for Joshua? Why did she love him even more than her sister's kids? Perhaps she was getting senile; old age was creeping up to her and she didn't want to face this. Or was it perhaps her suppressed longing for a child of her own emerging again in her love for this beautiful boy?

Jean started to climb the steep, narrow wooden steps to the attic, where Joshua had his room. Her heavy, clumsy bag bounced against the wall every step she took as she dragged it along. In the small, almost lightless corridor she took off her coat and gloves and hung them on a rusty nail.

From her bag she took a clean, long-sleeved hospital gown and a cotton mask. She put on the gown and tied the mask over her nose and mouth. Then she knocked on the door and entered the room, which was barely big enough for the large hospital bed which she borrowed from the Red Cross. The walls of the room were decorated with posters and magazine pictures of animals, many brought by herself, and they seemed to make the room even smaller and stuffier. Quickly she walked towards the bed.

"Joshua?"

He was lying on his back, his eyes closed and the blankets tightly tucked in around him. His kinky mass of black hair lay flat and damp on the pillows. The boy opened his eyes. They were burning with fever and resembled bright stars in a velvet-dark sky, yet his black skin had lost its lustre and was of a greyish, sickly colour like dirty dishwater.

"Hi...nurse..." His voice was small, but his smile was as wide as ever in his sunken face with the protruding cheekbones.

"Hi, Joshua."

She took his temperature. 104.3. And this was morning... His pyjamas were drenched with perspiration. The sheets were wet, too. Jean hesitated. What should she do? She knew the regulations, the ethics of her profes-

sion.

Fight. Fight for life. That would mean cold sponge baths to bring the fever down, oxygen for his fast and shallow breathing, intravenous injections, hospital care. He had to drink, drink, but his glass with milk was untouched. He should be forced to. For what? she wondered. To keep death away for one or two more days? Let him die in peace. In his own time. In his own way. It was senseless to bother him more than necessary. During the many months she had been nursing him, she had overturned quite a few rules. Might as well go all the way. Right or wrong, it made no difference anymore.

"I'll just wash your face and hands, Joshua, and give you clean PJs. I'm sure you're not up to a big scrubbing today. Come, I'll help you to sit up a bit, so I can change your top." The boy shivered when she was helping him and goosepimples covered his skinny body.

Jean worked quickly. When she was finished and had managed to get a dry, double folded sheet underneath him without remaking the whole bed, she propped up his pillows and made him drink some of the milk with little sips. Her eyes roamed over the room, inspecting it. As always it was spotlessly clean in contrast with the rest of the house, which could stand quite a bit of improvement.

Joshua's own dishes and cutlery were neatly stacked away on a shelf at the wall, his washing basin and jug had been well cleaned and the room was dusted and the floor scrubbed. She never had to remind Joshua's mother about her duties in the room.

She had laid the law down. If the room wasn't kept in a spic and span condition, Joshua would not be allowed to stay and would have to go to the sanatorium outside of the city. Mrs. Stewart had never let her down. Even the small, curtainless window near the bed was sparkling. Jean looked through it and her eyes fell on the cluster of dozing pigeons on the flat roof, which belonged to the neighbour. Joshua followed her view.

"Dey is all dere..." he said, suddenly alert. "'cept Tippytail. Ah sen' em away jest affer fliv' dis mornin'. Big Paddy jest cum in... He wuz late, but he had got to do long 'ours af flyin'...had ter go so fur awayz..." Exhausted he fell back on the pillows.

"I don't know how you can keep them apart," Jean sighed, playing her part of the game like she did every day. "To me they're all alike. I'm so dumb."

Joshua shook his head. "No you ain't...Ah figger ye kno' a lot 'bout folks...Yo' ain't no dumb et oll...Yo' is a pretty smaht lady..." A sudden cough came rasping from his chest. He struggled for air.

"Don't talk, Joshua, I'll hold you. Here... Spit," Jean said, grabbing the sputum bowl.

When the coughing spell was over, Joshua nodded into the direction of the shoe box on his night-table. "Big Paddy bro' a messjus back fer me... you kin read et..." he whispered.

Jean startled. He was taking this game too seriously. You don't play make-belief games anymore when you are on the verge of death, she thought. For months they had had their fun together. Pretending that the pigeons were carriers, he had sent them out every day with messages for people all

Continued on page 4

The pigeons

over the world. The daily newspapers and the radio supplied names and causes galore. Sportsmen, presidents, heroes, royalty, sick or lonely people, kids hurt in accidents, had all received his words of hope, sympathy, congratulations, encouragement or whatever.

And just as sure as the pigeons delivered Joshua's letters, they also brought back the replies of the people he had written to, all scrawled on a piece of notebook in Joshua's own handwriting: Letters from President Reagan and Carter, from Terry Fox and after his death from his parents, letters from Anne Murray, Darryl Sittler, Prince Charles and Lady Di, the American hostages, and many, many more.

He kept all these letters in his shoe box, reading them over and over again as if he had never read them before, as if he himself had not written them. His memory was remarkable. He had given each pigeon a name, fitting the personality which Joshua had had described to him. Each one had been assigned to a special task, most suited to its character and physical build. Paddy was the strongest one, Tippytail the most persuasive, Greynose the kindest and Blackbeard the sharpest thinker, and so on. Joshua always knew exactly which pigeon he had sent to a certain person, on which day with what message.

"Ah've 'undreds ef frien's," he had told Jean several weeks ago. More frien's dan mos' other folks has...."

And so they had played this game of make-belief during the many hours that Joshua had to spend on his back in his small attic room, where no one else was allowed except his mother and Jean because of the contagiousness of his disease. And all the while they both had pretended that the game was all true, yet they both knew too well that it was not.

"You've received another answer? Today?" Jean asked alarmed. The boy was much too sick to write.

Joshua nodded. "In the box... read et...."

She picked up the piece of paper on top of the pile in the box and tried to read it. The letters blurred into wavy lines of foggy words.

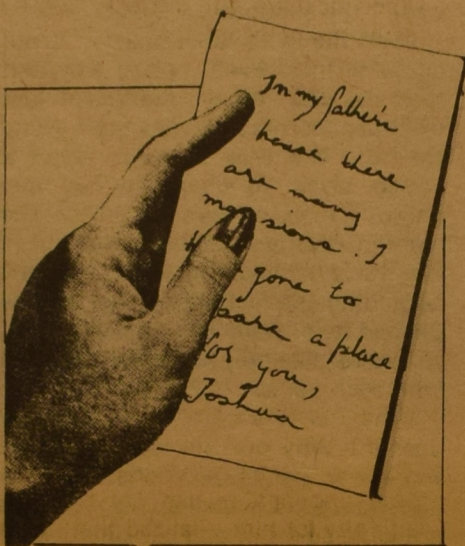
"I'd better put on my glasses," she said, getting them out of her purse. The note trembled in her hands when she read the hard-to-decipher words: "In my Father's house are many mansions. I have gone to prepare a place for you, Joshua."

Bewildered Jean looked at the boy. She had the sudden feeling as if someone had given her a total knock-out, cutting off her breath and dulling her brain. This was crazy. Ridiculous. Weird. Even scary. They had been playing a game, hadn't they? This note had no right to be part of it. It belonged to another world, the world of reality. No, not even that, but to a world beyond, the world of after, whatever that was. She wasn't sure about that. Not sure at all.

There was such a thing as Christmas and she knew its religious meaning, but for her the whole Christmas season was nothing more than a pain in the neck, which forced her to send cards to people she didn't really care for, to buy presents for her nephews and nieces, who had already everything money could buy, and to eat lavish meals, the last thing she needed. Christmas and the life hereafter? Humbug. That's what Scrooge said. She remembered that from school. How she agreed with him!

Now here was Joshua with this quote from the Bible. She had attended too many funerals for not knowing its source. So Joshua knew that he was dying. That was all right. He had a right to know and she had been too chicken to tell him. Had his mother told him? She doubted it. Mrs. Stewart was still clinging to a shred of hope. Yet Joshua knew. Good. She could accept that, but that he was still playing this silly make-belief game while death was lurking around the corner. That was scary. Unnatural.

It gave her the creeps. It was his own writing. Was he fooling himself or wasn't he? Had he played this game so seriously that now he indeed believed that someone else was writing the answers to him? Had his mind gone and she had not even noticed it? It made no sense. No sense at all! Or was



he delirious with fever? Did he need more medical care than she could give him? And she had had the nerve to go against her boss's wishes and to deprive him of the care which a sanatorium could have given him....

Her thoughts flew back to that horrible day almost half a year ago. That scene in Dr. Bard's office. Dr. Bard, the director of the Health Department, had wanted Joshua, in "Sunshine," the sanatorium twenty miles out of the city. She had fought and fought to keep him at home. They both knew that his tuberculosis was beyond help. It was only a matter of months, not much more.

"Why send him away from his own protective environment?" she had argued. He would feel hopelessly lost among white people, shy and timid child as he was. And how in the world would his mother ever be able to visit him on a regular basis? With four young children and the youngest barely three, deserted by her husband for more than two years and living on the meagre scraps which the welfare officer reluctantly allowed her, she would neither have the means, nor the opportunity or transportation to visit her oldest child so far out of town.

"And what about that cubby hole of an attic with polluted air and stench and filth all over? Dr. Bard had barked back at her, quick and hot-tempered man that he was. "Is that a place for a child with tuberculosis in an advanced stage? What he needs is fresh air, a sterile environment, constant care and wholesome food!"

"Fresh air?" she had sneered. "Where? Twenty miles from this polluted city with its heavy industry? Don't make me laugh! You won't find a breath of fresh air until you hit the mountains more than three hundred miles away! Joshua would ache with homesickness and be dead in no time if he had to live away from home, regardless how pure his environment.

Besides, he couldn't live without his pigeons either. They were his life-line and only form of entertainment during the long, lonely hours of the day."

"Pigeons? What pigeons?" Dr. Bard had roared.

"Well, he has these carrier pigeons, which he sends out and...."

"Carrier pigeons? That boy has carrier pigeons? Jean, are you crazy? Don't you know that pigeons and all sorts of animals can carry that disease to men and beast? That child is dying with tuberculosis and you let him play with carrier-pigeons?" He had cursed and banged his fist on the table, upsetting paper clips, files and a can with pencils and pens.

Jean had tried to interrupt him, realizing her enormous blunder too late, but she had no chance to tell him that it was all a game, that Joshua never had even touched any pigeon at all.

Dr. Bard had raved on, getting angrier by the minute, venting his dislike for the competent nurse, the only one of his staff who always dared to defy him. "Where are your senses? How long has this been going on? You've had the case, what?, two, three weeks and you know about those pigeons and you let the kid get away with it? You don't do a darned thing about it? You call yourself a qualified nurse? You think you know it all? Just because you're the oldest member of the staff and have the most years of seniority?"

He was spitting his fury with such biting sarcasm that the other staff members, listening at the other side of the door, had started to worry about the outcome of this fight. Dr. Bard and Jean were often in each other's hair, but this time they, or at least the boss, was really pulling it.

Only when Dr. Bard stopped to catch his breath, Jean had had the chance to explain the real situation. It took some time, but at last Dr. Bard took her word for it that Joshua had never touched the animals. Yet at the same time he was more determined than ever to have "the Stewart case" admitted to "Sunshine" as soon as possible.

"All right," Jean said. "Go ahead. It's your baby now. I'm quitting." She had taken off her white-starched apron, which she, old-fashioned as she was, always insisted on wearing. The crazy part was that she meant it. Almost forty years of nursing she had thrown in to keep Joshua at home. And so she had won....

Won? No, lost! Stubborn, know-it-all imbecile she was, she had for once let her heart speak against all nursing rules and what a mess it had created!

With a pang of shame she remembered how she had also battled with Mr. Branham, the welfare officer, whom she had asked for an increase in Mrs. Stewart's weekly allowance, so she could buy some wholesome food for Joshua. Bluntly he had refused. He had to go by certain regulations and already Mrs. Stewart was receiving the top amount which he could allow her.

"You know as well as I do that a woman with four kids can only exist on that, but not really live. It's peanuts. How could she buy milk and eggs for a sick child with that money?" Jean had argued.

The man had merely shrugged his shoulders. "That's her problem. It's bad enough that we have to look after people like that. They're all the same: too lazy to do a good day's work. No wonder they are constantly unemployed.

ed. All they do is breed children and when they can't cope with their families anymore, one of the parents, if not both, takes off and leaves us with the mess. Mrs. Stewart should be darned lucky that she still gets what she gets."

Suddenly she had become very angry. If there was one thing she couldn't stand, it was people who lumped others together according to their beliefs, colour or background and then denied them their own individuality. As if their common skin colour or heritage had deprived each one of his own personal characteristics and mental make-up.

"This child needs an extra allowance for food," she had demanded. "I'm not leaving here until I get it. No matter what."

He had laughed. "Please yourself. There's a chair. Why don't you sit down, for you will have to wait a very long time, for I'm not giving her one extra penny." He had turned back to his paperwork, ignoring her.

By this time her blood was boiling. She had had great difficulty in controlling herself. Then she played the one trump card she had, and it was a high one.

"All right. If that's your last word, you're a very, very foolish man... Imagine to jeopardize your reputation for a couple of lousy dollars!"

Branham's head veered up. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I'm going to write a nice letter-to-the-editor in our city paper, telling the whole sob story and pointing out that certain welfare administrators in the black section of town are squandering the tax payers' money. Joshua would cost the tax payers at least a hundred dollars a day in the sanatorium, while ten dollars a week could feed him at home! I'm sure the readers won't like this. They won't like it at all! Goodbye."

She had started to walk to the door, expecting to be called back. She was. All she got out of the bargain was five dollars a week extra in food coupons. As if Mrs. Stewart could not be trusted with cash. She might buy beer.

So she had won another victory, but it was a sour one, which left her with a feeling of shame. What a cheap way to achieve her goal! Unworthy of her and unworthy of her profession. She had heard the nasty word which Mr. Branham had muttered under his breath and which she was meant to hear. She told herself that she couldn't care less. The man had been impossible to deal with; yet deep-down she did care.

Couldn't she have convinced him with kinder, more persuasive words? Why had she been so anxious to throw her weight around?

Why couldn't she have been a bit submissive, accepting the man's authority and then discuss the matter with him in a mature manner? What had gotten into her the last few years that she was so easily angered and so obstinate? She had realized that she was slowly becoming a cranky old woman, still devoted to her work and patients, but getting more difficult by the day for the people she had to work with.

And why? Why? The question had been haunting her for quite some time. Because the future looked bleak and purposeless and the past and present did not have enough substance to give lasting meaning to her life? Was life really no more than a drag? And the only one she really had been living for these last months, a young negro boy,

The pigeons

was going to leave her, too? No one could live on a memory alone. On top of it, she had taken matters into her own hands and she wasn't sure anymore if she had been right. Joshua with his weird game.... Was there something mentally wrong with him and she had not even noticed it?

"Nurse... nurse Jean ... what ain't the matter?" Joshua's small, but urgent voice brought her abruptly back to reality. Jean looked at him as if she had never seen him before. She saw the sudden concern in his dark brown eyes, its genuine love and warmth. This child weird? This boy who never complained? Whose only desire was to give love and to make friends? Joshua mentally sick? No. Perhaps she was, but not him! He was saner than she was... She had started to doubt, had panicked because she was losing him and could not miss him; because she was unable to face reality. The reality of death.

"I... I didn't know that you knew that you were going to die, Joshua," she said honestly. "I wasn't sure whether I should tell you. But now you know, don't you? And you are not scared?"

Fool! Triple-dyed fool! How could she ask a stupid question like that? Where were her senses? Had it flipped out because she herself was scared to death to die?

"Scar'd?" There was puzzlement in the boy's voice. "Why should ah be scar'd? It's goin' to be nice." he had difficulty speaking and Jean had to strain her ears to catch the words.

"Mah Sunday teacheh... tole me dat death is lak a black curt'n... et our side... but et Jesus' side... you kin see thro et... et's lak lace...lov'ly lace... and behin' et... oll iz light an' boot'ful...."

"Yes, it will be beautiful for you," Jean said, fighting a lump in her throat. "But we all will miss you so much, I, too, Joshua. Oh, Joshua, I love you so!" Impulsively she tore off her face mask. For once Joshua should see all of her face. Then, against all nursing rules about precaution, she kissed his hot, damp forehead.

Joshua put his skinny arms around her neck and with the little strength he had left, he held her close. "Thankee fer eve'ythin'...." he whispered, Ah luv... you... too." A new coughing spell suddenly shook his body and tried to choke him.

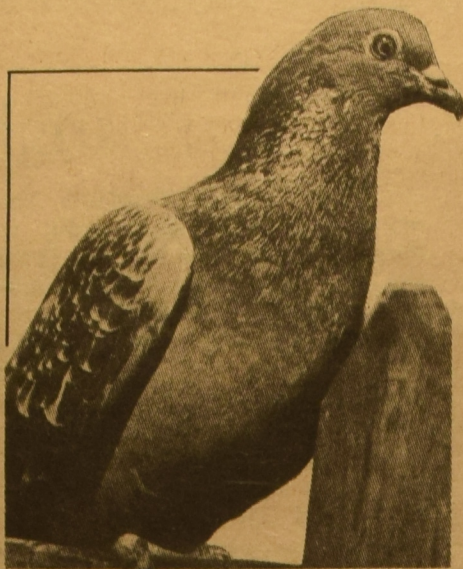
Gently Jean put him down. "No more talking now, Joshua. Just lie down and rest. I'll go and see your Mom now."

He nodded in agreement. "Mum gwine... be lon'ly w'en Ah've gon' ter Jesus... but I sent Tippytail ter Dad... ter tell em to cum' 'ome... Gooby, nurse...." He closed his eyes in sheer exhaustion, yet smiled.

Jean left the room. In the dark hallway she let her tears flow. For the first time there would be no message back tomorrow from the pigeons, for by intuition Jean knew that there would be no new tomorrow for Joshua, and the world would be the poorer for it.

...

That night she was unable to sleep. Her ears were tuned to the telephone. Call me as soon as... something happened, she had told Mrs. Stewart, buy nobody had called. At last she got up. She was too restless to stay in bed any longer. She shivered when she walked to the window. Every bone in her body seemed to ache. Looking outside, she saw that it was snowing and a thin white blanket was covering



the world outside. That explained her aching body.

She looked at her clock. Not yet four o'clock. Joshua, was he still alive? Did he still need her? Suddenly, panic seized her. How could she have asked Mrs. Stewart to call her? How could she leave Joshua alone to make a phone call at some booth in the street? What was the matter with her that she had acted so dumb? Joshua needed her. His mother wouldn't know what to do when he was gasping for breath... She had to go there. At once.

Quickly she dressed and went outside. The peaceful serenity of the quiet, snow-covered street was in flagrant contrast with the turmoil and anxiety in her heart. She drove through red lights and stop signs and raced the highway far over the speed limit. There was no traffic. Not even a truck. Strange. Then it dawned on her that it was Christmas.

Christmas! The last thing she was interested in. She had declined invitations from relatives and friends to spend Christmas with them. Christmas meant gaiety, presents, laughter. Having a good time. Well, she was not in the mood for it and why spoil the fun of others? She could always crawl into bed to catch up on her sleeping. Besides, she had already decided weeks ago that no matter what, she would stay in the city to look after Joshua.

Joshua, who now was dying.... The pain stabbed her again like a sharp knife and she swallowed hard to get rid of the lump in her throat. But the pain remained. Joshua, Joshua, her heart cried, I can't miss you. You are all I have....

She reached the house. Too late she realized that she had forgotten her bag with clean laundry, her apron and mask. Didn't matter. She could always go back for it. She was in a hurry now. She wanted to see Joshua once more... he needed her.... She took the stairs as fast as she could manage and knocked on the door, which was almost immediately opened by a small, dark man. The light of the bare bulb in the hall fell on his tear-stained face, which somehow reminded her of Joshua.

"You is' the nurss, Ma'am?" His voice was hoarse.

Jean nodded, unable to speak and to believe what her eyes told her.

"Com'on in, Ma'am. Ah wuz just goin' to call you... He iz gon'... he died jest tin minuts ago... You com'on in. May wiv' will be mighty glad you've cum'."

Totally bewildered, Jean followed him into the house, Joshua dead... and his father home! She was unable to grasp the reality of both facts. Mrs. Stewart came to her, her eyes brimming with tears.

"He's gon'... my chil' Joshua gon'...."

Impulsively Jean threw her arms

around her and the big, shaking woman clung to her as a child, looking for comfort which Jean could not give. She only felt ashamed for being so wrapped up in her own sorrow, that she had paid little attention to the needs of Joshua's mother. After all Joshua had been Mrs. Stewart's child; not hers, regardless what her own feelings and desires had been.

"Did he suffer much?", she asked hesitantly when she was seated.

Mrs. Stewart shook her head. "No, he ain't had no pain or bad coughin' spells. He jest was layin' there, lookin' et the door. He sayz he was waitin' for hiz Dad... and then I hear some knockin' on the door and Ah reckon' that's the nurss, but Joshua sayz 'dat mah Dad.' And sho' it was. Samuel had cum' 'ome...."

Jean looked at the man sitting at the table, who softly cried and clumsily wiped his tears with the dirty sleeve of his worn-out sweater.

"You... you still saw him alive then?" Jean asked with an unsteady voice.

Mr. Stewart looked up, and nodded vigorously. "Yas M'am. Mah Joshua and Ah had a good talk lak dem 'ole dayz. He wuz mightly 'appy to see me an' Ah ain't had no kno'in' 'bout his bein' so sick...." He started to cry again with noiseless sobs like that of a small child. Then he said, without looking up: "An' he tol' me..."

"Dad... now you 'ave ter tek keer of de fambly fer Ah ain goin' ter Lor' Jesus...." His body shook uncontrollably and again Jean, overwhelmed with pity for him, realized that he was no more than a big, insecure child.

Mrs. Stewart put her hands on his shaking shoulders. "Et's goin' ter be awright now, Sam. You ain't no bad man... you jest had too much pretty big problems. Ah'm mighty glad dat you're cum' 'ome and all de chillun, too. Dat wuz why Joshua call' you ter cum' back."

Jean could not believe her ears. "Joshua didn't really call him home, did he?", she asked Mrs. Stewart. It could not be. "He had just pretended to send Tippytail, hadn't he?" It had all been a make-belief game. Yet Joshua's father was sitting right here at the table.... Suddenly she felt very unsure. Her whole world built upon facts and reality seemed to slip away into a deep gaping hole, leaving her without any foundation.

"Et wuz Joshua awright....," Mr. Stewart said, lifting up his head and trying to control his voice. "Ah doan kno' nuthin' 'bout dem piguns, but Joshua call' me... oll day yest'day... Ah ain't had no wo'k an' money an' place ter sleep... Ah wuz tinkin' goin' 'ome fer a long 'ime, but Ah doan deer ter... as Ah've lef' the fambly... dem wuz sho'r mad wid me.... But oll de 'ime Ah wuz seein' Joshua's face, tellin' me ter cum' 'ome... ter tek keer af de fambly.... Ah ain't had no uther choice.... Ah wuz goin' ter de hi'way an' dis truck stops an' the feller sayz, 'Kin Ah giv' you a ride?' An Ah sayz, 'Yassir' an he tek me oll de way 'ome, ri't in front of may ow' house...."

"Dat wuz jest a miracul'," Mrs. Stewart said. "We kinnot unnerstan' dem thin's, but Ah'm sho'r dat dey piguns carr'd Joshua's messejus stral't ter heav'n."

Jean did not know what to say. Nothing made sense anymore. Her whole world had fallen to pieces. Joshua was dead and her conviction that facts and figures could prove and explain all that there was to life, had

been ripped into shreds by a make-belief game of a young, dying child. Somehow this whole weird story must just be coincidence. That was the only explanation. How else could she go on living if she had nothing left to hold on to? She then might as well give up. She was so deeply lost in thought, that she veered up when Mrs. Stewart gently pulled at her sleeve.

"Joshua left a messuj fer you, nurss. He sayz, 'Ah ain't sendin' no pigun to nurse Jean et Chrismus, for dem piguns s'ould 'have a 'olleday too et Jesus' burfday an' Ah reckon dat nurse Jean will cum heer an'way this mornin'.' Et's upsters in hiz room."

Jean followed Mrs. Stewart to the attic. Joshua had left a message for her! A sudden wave of comfort swept over her, engulfing her whole being. Even in his last moments Joshua had thought about her! What the message was didn't matter, wasn't important; what counted was that he had given her a farewell note, a last concrete, visible object to cherish!

Death had not yet started its devastating work and Jean felt deeply touched by the faint smile which still seemed to linger on his still, serene face. Had he indeed gone through that lovely curtain of lace into a world of light and beauty? Was there indeed a reality like that? She still could not believe that. And who would ever know?

Mrs. Stewart took a small piece of paper out of Joshua's shoebox and gave it to Jean. Then, quietly she left the room.

With trembling fingers, Jean fumbled for her glasses and read the few lines in Joshua's scrawled handwriting:

"Dear nurse Jean,
Jesus kin make you happy, too,
Merry Christmas.

Your friend Joshua."

Jean read the words aloud, but they had no meaning for her. Somehow she felt let down. What had she expected? Another expression of love? Of thanks? Of encouragement? These words on the scrap of paper had nothing to do with her. That was Sunday school stuff. Kids' stuff. Jesus? That sweet, cuddling baby in the manger which caused all that silly Christmas fuss? That little child with the big halo around His head? What did He have to do with her or she with Him?

Sentimental nonsense. Good for business and for the sale of Christmas cards: Some stupid oxen and sheep standing as if in trance around a hay-filled manger with a baby in it! Or worse: Laughing kids around it of every possible skin colour and race you can imagine, holding hands as if they were the greatest friends!

What hypocrisy! Just look around you what the world is really like. Black and white fighting like cats and dogs right here on the block! And take a man like Branham with his racial prejudices! They should picture him around that manger with Dr. Bard and herself. Three miserable, rotten people! What a lovely card that would make!

Joshua, you are all wrong, she thought. That Jesus is a fake, a phony. At best he belongs in a world of fairy tales, in a world of make belief, like your pigeons. Pigeons?

"But Joshua's father did come home, didn't he?" a small voice said from somewhere.

"Coincidence, just coincidence," she said stubbornly.

Continued on page 7

Children

Esther's search for a father

by Berta Hosmar

"I just can't do it this morning", sighed Esther, and with difficulty she fought back her tears. If only she would not feel so very tired, and could stop coughing she might at least be able to bake the bread and sweep the floor, so mother would have some time to sit down when she came home from hoeing the garden and looking after the animals. Sunlight streamed into the small house through the open door and window. It was a beautiful, glorious morning, the birds were singing at the top of their voices, to give praise to God, their Creator, but there was no song in Esther's heart.

Here she was, eleven years old, a Jewish girl, daughter of the chosen people of God, living in the country of Palestine which Jehovah Himself had given to her people, and she had every reason to be thankful, if only she felt healthy and strong again.

True, her mother was a widow (father had died years ago. Ruth could barely remember him.) but she had a cute, seven-year-old brother, David, and there was always food in the house.

Mother would spin the wool of their own sheep, and she could weave beautiful cloth, which she would later sew into clothes for herself and her children. Esther had also learned to weave and to spin, and she could help mother so much if only she would feel better. She had been sick for at least a year now, and her fatigue was getting worse instead of better, although she rested a lot.

Mother had no money to take her to a doctor, but old Anna, one of their neighbours, who knew almost as much about illnesses as a doctor, had told Esther to rest a lot, and she had given her some medicine which Anna herself had made from dried herbs.

But nothing had helped. Esther wanted so badly to have fun with her friends and to be mother's helper at home. Mother had to work so hard and Esther was only becoming a burden to mother. Although mother tried to be loving and patient, Esther had noticed lately that she lost her temper with Esther and David much more quickly than before Esther had become sick.

"I wish I had a father", Esther wished fervently, as she had so often wished lately. If she had a father, he could do all the chores mother now had to do, and mother would not be so busy and have more time to be happy and cheerful at home. And David and Esther would have two parents to love them instead of only one.

"Esther, I got something to show you!" cried David excitedly, as he came running into the house, interrupting Esther's depressing thoughts.

"Look what I made. I'm going to sell these at the marketplace!"

"What are they supposed to be?" asked Esther curiously. David felt a little insulted. "Can't you see?" he asked impatiently. "They are birds, of course. I carved them out of wood. I bet many people will like them. I made them when Mother made me look after the sheep and now I have enough to sell."

Esther suppressed a giggle with difficulty. The things in David's grubby little hands looked more like donkeys or camels than like birds, but no sense discouraging David. He always came up with new ideas. "Nice

try," she encouraged him. "And it also makes the time go faster when you are out in the fields."

"You bet!", replied David enthusiastically and then the two children heard another voice.

"How are my two neighbours this beautiful morning. Listen, I have great news," announced Reuben, a neighbour boy who was one of Esther's best friends. They had grown up together and played together ever since they



could walk, and Reuben still visited Esther frequently while many of her other friends came to see Esther less often or had stopped coming all together.

"I'm just no fun to be with anymore. I'm always sick," Esther had often thought but Reuben had made up for the loss of several friends.

"How come you're not out in the fields to work, and what's the big news?" asked Esther curiously.

Reuben looked around as if he were afraid somebody might see him, and then he started to whisper.

"I have a plan, but you must not tell anybody", he began. "You want to get well again, don't you Esther? Well, I've also noticed that you don't get better. Tomorrow morning when your mother is out in the fields, I'm going to pick you both up and we'll go to Jerusalem."

"Impossible!" cried Esther, who had felt excited and hopeful for a moment.

"You know I can't walk that far, Reuben. It takes at least an hour to get there, and I'm lucky if I can walk for ten minutes before I'm completely exhausted."

"Leave that part to me," answered Reuben, full of confidence. "That part is the least of our worries."

"But what do you want to do in Jerusalem?" asked Esther, and again Reuben began to whisper.

"I've talked it over with your mother a while ago, and so did my parents, but your mother won't hear of it or give her permission. You've both heard of Jesus, the great prophet who does so many miracles. Well, He's in the neighbourhood now, and will be close to Jerusalem tomorrow. We only have to follow the crowds to find Him. Your mother does not believe in Him. She has heard many times that He is a deceiver and that most Pharisees hate Him very much and even want to kill Him. She's afraid to become involved. Anybody who follows Jesus may get

into trouble with the Pharisees. Your mother has also heard about the miracles, but she told my parents that she knew somebody from Nazareth where Jesus grew up. That person knew Jesus ever since he was a small boy, and he said that Jesus was just like everybody else, nothing special. Your mother does not believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Promised One, but I do, and so do my parents. For once Esther and David, you'll have to do

mother is working behind that hill, so let's first take a short detour so she won't see us."

The three children walked slowly and quietly for a while until beads of perspiration started to form on Esther's forehead.

"I have to rest," she said breathlessly. "I told you I couldn't do it."

"And I told you to leave that to me," said Reuben, as he took the package that he had been carrying off his shoulders.

"Your goatskin mattress!" marvelled David. "I see what you did Reuben, you turned your bed into a stretcher."

"My father helped me. It was done in no time. All we needed were some strong sticks and some rope," explained Reuben modestly, and again Esther thought, "If only I had a father, he might have persuaded mother and he might have taken me himself."

"Climb on this stretcher Esther. That's why I needed you David. You are strong enough to help carry your sister," commanded Reuben, and although Esther felt a little silly, she had to admit that Reuben's plan worked, at least this far.

"I have to have faith," she told herself over and over again, as they approached Jerusalem and met more people who also carried their sick and talked about Jesus. She had to admit to herself that she became more and more excited. These people also had faith, or they would not come. Could it be, could it possibly be, that this Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, the Son of God, as He had claimed to be?

"His words are so wonderful, they give you such peace. He speaks about a kingdom of love and light, and He helps the poor and the needy and the fatherless," she overheard an old lady say to her companion, and all of a sudden Esther's eyes filled with tears, and her heart filled with longing. Oh, she was also sick and needy, how she wanted to meet this Jesus and hear what He had to say. Even if He did not make her well, she still had to see Him and hear His words.

"Over there, where that crowd is, that's where He must be," shouted Reuben suddenly, and although little David panted because of the unusual load he was carrying, the two boys moved with greater speed.

"Can you walk now Esther?" asked Reuben. "The stretcher takes up too much space." They were very close now, and they could hear a voice speak, which had to be the voice of Jesus.

Slowly the three children elbowed their way through the crowd until they were close enough to see Jesus.

Esther knew it was Him, just by listening to that wonderful, kind voice.

"Believe on Me, cast your burden on Me," said the voice, and then Jesus turned around and Esther could see His face.

The little bit of unbelief and doubt that was still buried deep down in her heart, vanished instantly after she saw those eyes, so full of love, looking at her. "Father," she stammered, not even knowing what she said. "Father, Master".... And even before she felt new strength flowing through her whole body, and felt that the urge to cough had disappeared, she knew that she had found what she had wanted to find so badly. She had found her Father.

something your mother may not know, at least not yet. We'll leave tomorrow and when your mother comes back, my parents will tell her where we are. By then you may already be well. But you must have faith; you must believe that

He can and will heal you." Reuben stopped to catch his breath, and Esther said wonderingly, "I've heard about Him, but I know that mother is afraid and also that she does believe all the stories she has heard. I've never seen Him and neither has mother. I don't know if it's a good idea Reuben. Suppose I come back just as sick as before. Mother is going to be so angry!"

"I told you, you had to have faith," said Reuben impatiently. "Without faith in Him He can't help you, He has said so Himself."

"Why do I have to come?" asked David with sparkling eyes. The whole idea was like a big adventure, and that was just what David loved! If only he could keep their secret from mother for a whole day! "You'll see," was the answer.

"I've got to go now. Be ready at the same time tomorrow. I'll be here," said Reuben and five seconds later he was gone.

That night Esther slept little. The coughing kept her awake, but also the plan. Should she tell mother? No, she could not do that. If there was only a slight chance that she would get well, she would take that chance. Mother would understand. Mother wanted her well, too. But not this way. That's why it had to be a secret.

The next morning Esther packed some grapes and dried dates and a little while after mother had left for the fields, Reuben and David entered the house.

"What's that you are carrying Reuben?" asked David. "Is that your bed?"

"Kind of, just wait," whispered Reuben. "Now, let's be careful, your

Children

A very special night

by Minnie Teertsma



In a far away country, a long time ago, lived a little boy called Oni. He lived with his father, mother, brothers and sisters on a small farm. There were animals, too, on their farm — sheep, goats and donkeys. They all had important work to do. The sheep grew thick coats of wool on their backs, to make into coats and blankets. The goats gave milk to drink and cook with, and to make into cheese. The donkeys could carry heavy loads, all that is except one small donkey called Unka.

When Unka was born, Oni's father had said, "This donkey is too small and weak. He'll never grow big and strong enough to do any work." Oni had begged his father to let him keep the little one. He said, "I'll work with him every day and give him special food to make him strong."

Every day Oni worked with Unka to build up his leg muscles, and make them stronger, but at night, when the other donkeys came to sleep in the stable, they teased poor little Unka. "You can't do any important work like we do," they'd say. "You're a real good-for-nothing." Then Unka would feel very sad, and his wobbly legs could hardly hold him up as he walked to the farthest corner of the barn, and crouched down in a small dark corner.

One day, when all the other donkeys had gone to work for the day, something



happened to little Unka. Two travellers came to the little farm — a man and a lady. The man spoke to Oni's father, "Sir, my wife is very tired, and we still have a long way to go. Would you have a donkey for sale?"

Oni's father looked thoughtful for a moment, but then he shook his head. "I'm sorry," he said, "but all my donkeys are out working, and won't be back until very late."

From around the corner, Oni had heard the men talking, and a bright idea popped into his head. Here was a

chance for little Unka to show everyone that he could do an important job if he was needed.

A few minutes later, Oni brought Unka to the place where his father and the stranger were talking. He lifted one of Unka's long floppy ears and whispered, "Here's your chance, just show them you can do it."

Oni's father turned to them with a deep frown. Why had Oni brought that 'good-for-nothing' donkey here? Unka felt very uncomfortable, but when he looked at the lady and saw how tired she

looked, he straightened up his legs and lifted his head proudly. This lady needed him. She was too tired to walk anymore, but he could carry her.

Oni spoke to the stranger, "Sir, your wife can use my donkey. I'm sure he can do it." The stranger nodded his head. "Thank you," he said. And so they went on their way, the lady riding on Unka's back.

The sand was very hot on the little donkey's feet, and the sun made him very thirsty, but he didn't give up, and finally they arrived in the town of Bethlehem.

It was very busy there. In fact, there wasn't even one room left where they could sleep that night. The innkeeper brought them to a stable behind his house. There the stranger made a bed for them on the floor. Unka stretched his hot, tired little body, and settled down in a corner on some hay. Soon he was fast asleep.

Suddenly, something woke him up. What was that strange sound? It came from a feed box over there. Why, it was a baby! And kneeling around it, with their heads bowed low were some shepherds.

Something very special had happened in that stable that night. God had sent His own Son to be born there, as His special gift to us.

Little Unka didn't understand this, of course, but he felt very happy, because he now knew that he could do an important job if he was needed.

The pigeons

Continued from page 5

"Oh, yes?" the voice went on, "and how come then that Mr. Stewart saw Joshua's face all that day in front of him? How do you explain that he got a ride straight to his home, more than three hundred miles away? How come?"

"Stop it!", Jean said aloud. "Leave me alone.... I can't take anymore!"

She looked at Joshua. Dead. Gone forever. Yet that smile.... He was happy. The fact was there. She could never contradict that.

"Joshua," her heart cried, "you have found peace, happiness... Where? How?... I wish you could tell me...."

She was shivering all over partly caused by the penetrating coldness in the room, but even more so by her inner turmoil. Her stiff, numb fingers dropped the note on the floor and she bent over with difficulty to pick it up. Suddenly the word "too" seemed to jump at her. "Too". Also. Again she read the words: "Jesus kin make you happy, too." At once she stood very still, as if an invisible hand had calmed the storm within her. Joshua had been happy in spite of his illness and suffering. He was still happy. That she had to believe also. What had been his secret? Jesus. It stood there, black on white, in Joshua's own handwriting. Jesus, that child in the manger with His halo around His head? That baby? "Son of God, Son of God."

She did not know where the words came from. Son of God, not a small, cute helpless baby in a stable. That's what the world had made of Him, for a cute baby would not offend anyone, but instead strike an emotional chord in the hearts of adults and children alike. But the real Jesus was somebody else. Son of God. Who was telling

her this? Joshua? But Joshua was dead, wasn't he? Yet what had he said to his father? That he was going to the Lord Jesus... But his dead body then? A cocoon from which he had emerged and which was left behind as an empty shell?

The thoughts kept tumbling in her mind like pieces of a big jigsaw puzzle, which perhaps one day could be fitted into a beautiful picture. Jesus had made Joshua happy. She had to believe that. Joshua had never lied to her. And this Jesus could make her happy, too? She wasn't sure about it, not sure at all.

A new thought struck her like a flash of lightning unexpectedly lighting up the dark sky: She had to answer Joshua's message! Like everybody else she had to respond to it... There was no way out, for she knew that no matter what, she could never let Joshua down. The thought seemed to paralyze her.

All her obstinacy and arguments had been struck out of her hands like they were toy weapons, useless against true power. She had nothing left to defend herself with anymore; nothing left to support her. She had always believed in her own strength, had always managed to put matters in to her own hands. Now she felt as helpless as a baby.

"Joshua," she whispered, "I never thought you knew how unhappy I was. I never told you, yet you must have sensed it. You knew me better than I knew you. How much you must have loved me...."

Then, almost pleading, she added: "Give me time, Joshua. I don't know this Jesus, but now I want to know... Please, have patience with me... One day I'll answer you. I'll promise."

Then she left the room, closing the door gently behind her. Somehow the future looked less grim and purposeless.

*Glory to the
King of Kings*

The King's College
wishes its supporters
a blessed Christmas



THE KING'S COLLEGE
A Christian Liberal Arts College

A tear or two on Christmas Day

by John Martens

★ It was getting close to Christmas and, like everybody else, little Mike was looking forward to that great day when, at breakfast, Father would read the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem from the Gospel of St. Luke.

Mother with her gift for storytelling would keep Mike and his two small sisters and a still younger brother enthralled with her description of the unforgettable scenes unfolding in fields of Ephrata and under the roof of Bethlehem's stable where the Saviour was born that night. Everybody would listen to Mother and Father, too, would not keep his eye from her.

But ten days before Christmas, Mother got sick. She became very ill and on the second to last day before Christmas, Mother had to be taken to the hospital. It was in the evening that the ambulance arrived to pick up Mother. And before Mike's shocked gaze, the attendants carried her out of her bedroom on a stretcher, through the hallway and out of the front door into the waiting ambulance with its fiercely blazing headlights.

Through the open front door, out of the dark night came the wind, raging around the house and shaking at the trees while gusts of cold air pushed inside, tugging at a little curl of mother's hair that had escaped from under her bonnet. Mike gave Mother a last kiss and in her eyes only momentarily open, could be seen a great suffering and an immense mute sadness at the parting from her children. Father was talking with the ambulance driver and took his place by Mother's side and then the front door closed, the outside noises subsided and Mike was alone with his sisters and little brother, and Father's sister — Aunt Anna — who had come to look after the children.

That night Aunt Anna prayed fervently with the children to God Almighty for Mother's recovery and for the success of the operation Mother must undergo. And the children were full of hope for Mother's speedy homecoming; for they could not imagine her not being at home for long, far from her children; for who could take Mother's place?

The children still slept when Father came home at dawn the next morning. He was a despondent man for Mother had died that night after an unsuccessful operation.

Father sat by her bed with her hands in his when she passed away in peace, a peace not of this world, after she had uttered in great pain the names of her children and of her husband, one by one in a last farewell. Now Father was home again and he must tell his children that Mother would not come back. His heart broke for his little ones.

It was all so hard to understand for the children, and there were so many things to take care of now for Father and Aunt Anna. The younger children were so small and innocent yet, and looked with big eyes at all the unusual visitors and neighbours who came to express their sympathy.

Mike, a nine-year-old, wandered around in the garden most of that day or else his gaze turned into the direction the ambulance had gone the previous night. Mother went that way and now she would never be back. And his thoughts turned to last year's Christmas when Mother had told so beautifully the Christmas story in her inimitable way. Who would tell this year about Jesus' birth and the Angels and the Shep-

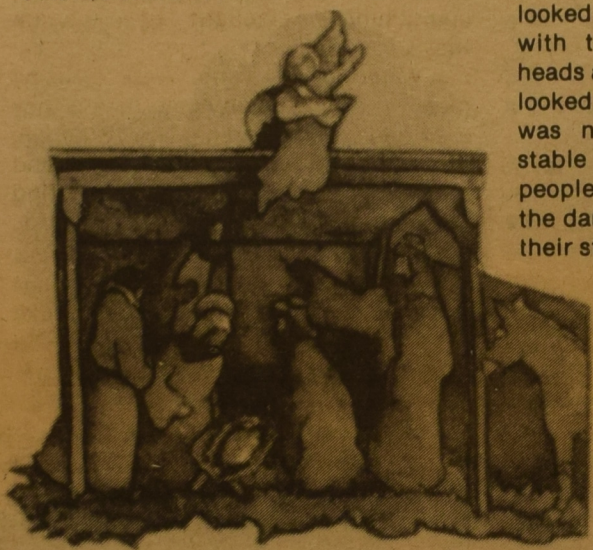
herds? And even now as soon as he stepped inside the house Mother would not be there to take care of her boy and wish him good-night come bedtime and Mike's little heart was shattered.

He was sad also for his Father who never cried...at least not openly. But Mike was not so sure that his Father did not cry in secret, for why was Father's nose so red these last days, as if he had a cold? Already before Mother was taken to hospital, Mike had noticed this and a vague feeling of alarm had crept over him at Father's sad face.

Aunt Anna took the children to bed on Christmas Eve. Father came to say good-night and his slightly trembling hand stroked the foreheads of his boys and girls, before he kissed them for the night.

The dream

Then Father went speechlessly downstairs again and, listening for a while to the slight noises coming from below as he always did, Mike soon fell asleep. And he dreamed.



He walked on the tree-bordered highway towards the town where the ambulance had taken Mother yesterday. He was going to find his Mother for he had many things to tell her and to remind her above all that tomorrow was Christmas Day and the day of telling the greatest of all stories.

He was in a hurry, for it was already getting dark and a strong wind was blowing. And still after complete darkness had fallen, he was struggling on along the unlighted road and he felt so very lonesome.

Once in a while he paused as if contemplating turning back to his Father and sisters and brother; but then the thought of going home without good news about Mother, made him go on.

But what was that? In the distance shone a little light. When Mike came closer, he saw that it shone through a little window in a farm building or barn, such as lined the road at regular intervals.

Mike walked through the gate for he wanted to ask how far it was to town. To his surprise he saw that there were animals tied to the trees alongside the barn. In the faint light falling through the semi-circular window of the stable he recognized the animals as camels. Often he had seen pictures of them in the children's Bible and Mike wondered what these camels were doing here in the middle of the night in such an out-of-the-way place. For camels belonged in the desert and not in a storm-filled Northern night.

Mike went to the door and pushed it open. Inside it was warm and full of people and they wore strange clothes. They made room for Mike and he

noticed that most of them wore some kind of robe, loosely draped over their shoulders and around their waist.

They carried tall, crooked staves in their hands and wore sandals on their bare feet. There were also a few women among them, the odd hairlock escaping here and there from below their brown and white blocked head scarves. And to the other side stood a little group of richly attired strangers; there were three or four of them and on their heads they wore tall crowns, as if they were Kings. And the crowns sparkled in the dim light of the stable while the gorgeously dressed wearers held in their outstretched hands little boxes made of gold and inlaid with sparkling jewels. Beside them their attendants carried more precious treasures to hand their masters.

Mike was puzzled. How did he get in this strange company? His Sunday School teacher had told of the shepherds of Ephrata and of the wisemen of the East who came to adore the Christ child. Sure, some of these men and women looked like shepherds and the others with their tall crowns on their dark heads and with their expressive features looked like very learned men. But this was not Bethlehem nor an oriental stable he had entered. For beyond the people crowded inside the door, loomed the dark shadows of horses and cows in their stalls, while overhead the chickens

shuffled in the rafters in protest against the unaccustomed interruption of their sleep.

Mike could not help but think deeply, for could it be perhaps that the circle of light formed by the single lantern a few feet away was also here shining on a miracle as it once did in Bethlehem? For that little crib above which hung

the single flickering lantern, apparently held everybody's attention.

Was the light shining upon little Jesus? Mike stepped forward. He was not afraid in this company. He wanted to make sure that the manger bathed in light cradled Mary and Joseph's son Jesus. The shepherds on one side and the kings on the other side made room for him, and Mike heard them mutter: "Let the boy pass, for the Prince of Peace is Saviour of both great and small and we would not dare stop him."

The shepherds and kings looked at him with deep affection and sad compassion and wiped away even a tear or two for the boy was apparently bewildered and in inner turmoil. Mike stepped still closer.

He was going to see little Jesus in his manger and ask him for the road and how far it was to his Mother, for that's why he had entered the stable. The light of the lantern shone straight on the simple crib and Mary, Jesus' mother, was fondly smoothing out Jesus' little blanket; things must look neat, for many visitors had come to look at her child and pay their homage to her firstborn and this little boy who was now coming towards the manger was one of them.

Joseph was in the shadows, softly humming an old Hebrew tune. He was a happy man and remembered how his Mother had sung this and similar tunes at the cradle of his younger sisters and brothers. Then Jesus' mother beckoned to Mike to come and look into the manger, while she folded back the coverlet.

Standing on tiptoe, Mike looked over the edge of the manger at a little child, looking not much different from other

babies. It's blanket was lying in a corner despite mother Mary's efforts. Was this child really Jesus, Mike wondered? Was it really so?

Then in its little hands and on its trampling little feet, Mike noticed dark scars. They were very clearly visible and Mike remembered again the sad story of how Jesus, when he was a grown-up man, was nailed to a cross and left there to die. His Sunday School teacher had told a breathless class of Sunday School students of the shocking event. Again Mike was perplexed. For Jesus was already a man when he died on the cross. How come then that even as a little child he wore the scars of his cruel treatment?

He was going to ask Mother when she would be home again, for Mother would know. She had once soothed her boy when Mike came home distraught over the teacher's story of Jesus' awful suffering and death. Mother told Mike of Jesus' victory over death and sin and Mike being only a young boy did not wholly comprehend it, if ever he did. But the mental picture of the Lord's scars remained a permanent one.

While Mike was looking full of respect on the child — for He was also a mighty Prince — lying in the manger and groping for the right words to ask where to find his Mother, the shepherds and kings began softly to sing a familiar song.

Mike turned around and listened. Their voices rose now and soon the stable was filled with their singing. And Joseph forgot his Hebrew cradle song and joined in. Mike himself knew the tune and despite himself, could not resist also to chime in; but then his eye fell upon the shepherdess to the right of him.

She was so ardently singing the words of "Silent Night, Holy Night" together with the others. She kept her gaze steadfastly on the manger as if laying eyes on a very special personal treasure and the other singers seemed to eye her as if she were their younger sister or a new member of their company and they smiled at her.

The songstress wore a colourful head scarf; from under it fell a curl of dark hair just like from under Mother's bonnet when Mike last saw her in the hallway at home when she was carried on a stretcher to the waiting ambulance.

With a sudden shock, Mike realized now that that Shepherdess who was singing of Jesus' birth and of salvation and peace, looked very much like Mother. Now she stepped from the row and walked towards Mike saying: "Mike, my boy, you found me here in good company" and she pointed to the manger. "Go tell Father and all the others. But best of all is that you, yourself, also found the Saviour here; you looked for me, but found him also. Tell Father everything." Mike wanted shelter in Mother's outstretched arms.

Some strange force held him back, however; then he awoke and felt Father's cool, slightly trembling hand on his forehead.

"I found Jesus and Mother," he told his Father wide-eyed.

Father did not say much, for who knows the depth of a young child's mind?

Downstairs Father and son kept each other company for a long time in comfortable chairs before the fireplace, while outside the stormwind raged. Tomorrow it would be Christmas and a measure of peace reigned in their hearts but peace knows its tears, even on Christmas Day.

Tom Haskins

by Freda Van Dyke

★ Little Irene Henderson was on her daily walk home from school. She was always glad to hear the teacher say: "Time to put away your work, children." Especially the last few days, Irene had been restless. A few more days and the Christmas holidays would start.

While thinking about all the excitement of Christmas, Irene had not even noticed someone coming towards her on the road.

"Hi, little girl, where are you going?", came the voice of a young man.

Irene looked up, rather surprised. "Well, I am going home, of course," she replied. "Who are you," she asked, "and where are you going?"

"Oh, you would not know me, because I don't live around here. But I am going home all right, because I am not going to stay in the big white building any longer. But, you see, I don't really know the way too well; maybe you can help me, little girl?"

All at once Irene started to run. Now she thought of what her Mother had told her so often, "Don't talk to strangers, dear, because some people are sick in their mind and, therefore, may harm you. Others like to play tricks on children to scare them. You just make sure to go straight home when somebody you don't know talks to you." Oh, what would happen if this man would come after her? Faster and faster she ran, until she arrived home. She told her Mother that she had been talking to a stranger. "He asked me where I lived,"

she said. "Then he told me that he was on his way home, but Mom, I think he was lost somehow. He looked so sad. It was then that I remembered that I actually should not talk to that strange man and then I ran home."

Irene's parents talked over what they should do. Perhaps this man was really in trouble. Mr. Henderson decided that they should show the good spirit of Christmas and find out whether there was anything that they could do for this man.

Irene hopped into the car and they went down to where Irene had met him.

Tom Haskins, who was left alone on the road, could not figure it out. What had he done wrong? That girl seemed so sweet and then all at once she had run away. What was it that made her take off so suddenly?

Where could he go from here? He was determined not to go back to that hospital. He had to find his brothers. On the farm he had a lot of work to do but what would they know about that in that white building? They don't even know how nice it is to talk to the animals and hold your head against the soft, warm skin of Bessie the cow.

Tom Haskins was twenty years old. He walked straight and always had a smile on his face. From a distance he looked like a real smart, clean cut young man. He was a young man alright, but with a mind and the intelligence of a child. In his youth he had met with a tragic accident, when his father, who had not seen the boy, backed up with the tractor. Tom survived, but with a damaged brain. Tom's father had a bitter struggle within himself. Nobody

had ever blamed him for it because it was an accident. That dear boy. How he had hoped and prayed for him. If only everything would work out for the best. If only Tom's mind could become normal again. Tom had miraculously improved but still he would never be able to communicate with others on an adult level.

A few weeks ago Tom's mother had become ill and needed an operation. This had put the Haskins family in a difficult position. What to do with Tom when his mother would go to the hospital. His two brothers attended college and could not stay home for a few weeks.

Finally it was the doctor, a good friend, who suggested that Tom could temporarily be admitted to the Hospital for the Mentally Disordered. Although they did not like that idea too well, they agreed after some persuasion.

Tom's mother went into surgery and was doing fine. His father worked at the farm between visiting hours and at night. Tom's brothers could attend classes and everything seemed to work out well. But what about Tom?

Tom was so homesick in the hospital. Somehow, the nurses did not understand him, he thought, even though they were very kind and good to him. He just wanted to go home. Wouldn't it be nice if he could come home before they even had to come and get him? When he had a chance Tom just left. Irene and her dad discovered somebody sitting along side the road. "Yes, Dad. He is the same man I was talking to." "Hello, young man. Is there something we can do for you?" Mr. Henderson soon

noticed that this young man was not dangerous but rather someone who was in some kind of trouble. He invited Tom to get into the car and sat beside him.

"How would it be if we take you home with us, so that you can have something to eat first and then we can see from there?"

"That would be very nice sir, because I do feel hungry."

"What is your name?" Irene asked.

"Tom Haskins, and I live on a farm with my parents and two brothers. My brothers go to school, but I don't have to go to such a school because I help my father at home, milking the cows and taking care of the horse."

It did not take too long before they were back home again.

"Hi, Mom," Irene exclaimed. "We are home and we found the man I met on the road." Mrs. Henderson got acquainted with Tom and saw to it that he ate a good warm meal.

"Well, Tom, I am glad that my husband and Irene found you so soon, because Irene did not know where you were heading either."

"I wonder why she left me. I can't remember saying anything nasty to her."

"I never had a little sister but I think that must be fun, eh? I think your little girl is sweet."

Irene's parents had noticed by the way he talked that this boy was either retarded or otherwise mentally disturbed.

"Where do you live Tom?"

"On the farm, with my brothers," he answered. "I have a picture of our

Continued on page 10

May you be blest by Christmas

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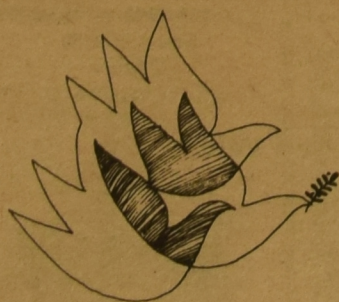


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Nick Taylor

Tom Haskins

whole family. Would you care to see it?"

"Yes, we would like to see that very much, Tom." With pride Tom showed the Hendersons the photograph. Irene asked, "Where are you Tom? That could not be you, beside your father, could it?" "Yes, I am the one right next to my Dad," Tom answered proudly. "Why do you hold your fathers hand there Tom? You are not a little boy anymore and you don't do that, do you?"

"Well, Tom, I think it is a beautiful picture and you can be proud that you belong to such a fine family," Mrs. Henderson interrupted.

"How were you planning to get home Tom?" Mr. Henderson asked.

"I guess I'll just keep on walking, because I don't have any money with me for a bus. It does not matter. I like to walk, as long as I know the way home. Will my Dad and Mom be surprised, when they see me coming down the laneway." Mrs. Henderson went to the kitchen and, standing in the doorway, signalled her husband to come and see her there for a moment.

"What do we do now? We cannot very well take him to the police station can we? The poor boy will be so frightened."

"Why don't we find out exactly where he lives and then get in touch with his parents?"

When they went back into the living room, they saw Tom and Irene sitting on the floor absorbed in a book with animal pictures. What a pitiful sight actually, this handsome young man sitting on the floor beside their eight-year-old, thoroughly enjoying themselves with a

picture book. Irene asked all kinds of questions about the animals which Tom seemed to know so well. Tom showed her another picture of a black horse.

"He looks just like our Prince. When I call him he eats a sugar cube out of my hand. I wish you could see that horse, he is such a beauty. And is he ever fast, you should see him gallop." Mr. Henderson asked Tom whether he knew his address or not. Tom answered that he knew it but that he always got so mixed up; and while he explained, he took a little slip of paper out of his pocket. "To whom it may concern." Then followed his name, address and telephone number. Had his family had a feeling that something like this would happen, and had, therefore, taken precautions? Mr. Henderson left Tom with Irene and their animal book, while he tried to get in touch with Tom's family.

Tom's father answered the phone. He felt so relieved to find out that Tom was safe with some nice family.

Mr. Henderson promised that they would keep Tom with them until his father could come to get him. When he arrived after a few hours they witnessed a touching scene.

"I am here Dad, I am here," and the father embraced his son. Tom was so thrilled to see his brother and his father that the tears ran down his cheeks. How alone he had been in that big white building, and now they were here, taking him home to the farm again.

"Oh Dad, let's go home now, please. Take me with you now." "All right son, I promise you I'll take you with me to the farm in just a few minutes. Now don't cry anymore because everything will work out and you will have your place at the farm again. Remember Tom, what I told you the other day, how everyone has received his own special place from the Lord?"

"Oh, I remembered Dad, because when I was all alone on the road I prayed while I was waiting if the Lord would keep my place on the farm for me and now He did, because now you take me home to be your helper again."

Religion was only a word to the Henderson's. You do some extra good around Christmas because you have to get the spirit of Christmas in your heart somehow. But to tell your child that the Lord has a special place for him, well, wasn't that a little bit far fetched?

Thanking Irene's parents for their concern and hospitality, the three men left; actually two men and a child, Mrs. Henderson thought, as they waved good-bye to them.

When everything was back to normal again, Irene still talked about Tom and that he had said he would ask his

mother whether Irene could come over sometime to visit them and see the horse.

How happy she was when Mrs. Haskins phoned them to come over and spend an afternoon with them, now that Irene had her holidays. The Henderson's gladly accepted the invitation. What a treat for her to be able to ride a real horse now.

What a wonderful day it turned out to be. While Tom was showing the horse and all the other animals to Irene, their parents talked together.

"How nice of you to invite us over, Mrs. Haskins."

"Let me tell you, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, I just had to do something to show our appreciation for the pity you took on Tom that day when he ran away from the hospital."

Then, of course, the conversation turned to Tom. Mr. Haskins told them how it all happened that day so many years ago.

"If I think back on that day, my heart just cries." You know, I have felt guilty about that accident for several years. Nobody would ever blame me but that is what I kept doing to myself. Again and again I would see that little boy twisted underneath the wheel of the tractor. Honestly, how often I wished that it would have been me under there. We did not know then how this happening would change our lives; not just Tom's, but ours as well.

"We know that we as parents can plan our future and that of our children, but what if the Lord has something else in mind for you and yours? For Tom, it was not at all to be what we would have hoped for him."

"When he was struck down, we had to learn to bend ourselves and take whatever God had planned for us without complaint or grudge. We were so thankful for his recovery, although he will never be like his brothers and other boys. It was in our son Tom that we found the true meaning of the words: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.' How openly this man spoke about the richness that is to be found in being a child of God and trust in Him, no matter how hard this may be at times. It had been hard for the Haskins family, too, but how at ease they seemed to feel now."

"Tom knows he belongs to Jesus, you see. You should hear him sing in the barn, when he sings of the love of his Saviour. My husband taught him the melody of Away in a manger and I sing it very often with him now," Mrs. Haskins said. When he insists on singing the last verse alone, I feel so grateful when I hear those words:

Be near me Lord Jesus,
I ask Thee to stay
Close by me for ever
And love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children
In Thy tender care
And fit us for heaven,
To live with Thee there.

"Isn't this worth more than all the gold in this world, Mrs. Henderson, when your child is so happy that he or she may belong to that same Lord? It does not matter whether we have a fine education and are very skilled or that we just go about our business in all simplicity. God blesses in so many different ways. He has blessed us abundantly. We and our three sons may all be part of his flock. It makes us feel so at ease and yet so eager to tell others what this means."

The Hendersons were very much impressed by these ordinary people, who seemed so content that you could almost envy them.

At night when they drove back home, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson were both very quiet. Were they pondering about the same thing? Would they and their children also belong to the Lord? Was it enough to sense that one simply had to believe something? "Mom," Irene whispered, "will you play that nice little song for me tomorrow on the piano. I would like to sing that just like Tom, because he sang it for me when we were in the barn. I would like it so much if I could sing it with him." "Yes, Irene. Tomorrow I will play it for you and then we are going to learn it together, because I would like to be able to sing that with you, too."

"You know," Mrs. Henderson said, "in a way, I wish I was like Tom's mother. To her, everything in life seems to have a meaning. It almost seems to me that she and her husband possess an unseen treasure."

"I think I know what they have and what is lacking with us," Mr. Henderson replied.

"I think they feel themselves wholly dependent on the Lord, and live with the knowledge that it is the Lord who keeps them in His care day by day."

Together they talked about this for a long time yet when they had arrived home. It was a clear and frosty night. Irene was sound asleep, dreaming about her adventures on the farm.

The light of the moon fell on two people on bended knees. These two people, their hands entwined in prayer together thanked God for Tom, who looking for his home, now had shown them the way home; the way home to the Father.

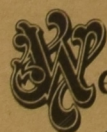
Peace on earth... It took hold of two people at that moment.



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by Bert Witvoet

December 5 — A Sinterklaas tradition

rumours that Sinterklaas lived in A.D. 300, but I wouldn't give much credibility to that story. You can't come all the way from Spain, even if it is by boat, and then fly up and down a country (small in comparison to a country like Canada, true, but large enough to maintain some 15 million people) and be 1600 years old at the same time.

Spain is about 800 miles south of Holland as the crow flies. Why Sinterklaas is thought to be from there is not quite clear to me. According to legend he was born in Asia Minor and was a bishop there in the Christian Church. He was a kindhearted man who became the patron saint of travelers, sailors, bakers, merchants and especially children. Somehow the veneration of this holy man spread to southern Europe and that's maybe why Dutch kids think of him as coming from Spain.

Sinterklaas is not portrayed as a jolly man the way Santa Claus is in North America. No ho ho ho proceeds from his saintly mouth. Even though Sinterklaas feast is not a religious festival, the character of this man is thoroughly shaped by the Christian Church. He is a wise and fatherly bishop who walks very slowly (when he walks) and nods his head very calmly while waving a white-gloved hand in a dignified manner.

Black Pete is something else, of course. He is in his twenties, I would say, judging by the fact that when I attended Kindergarten in Holland he delighted us by walking on his hands. There was a young man in our village living on Main Street who could do that too. But that was coincidence. Maybe Black Pete taught him the trick; who knows?

Black Pete is the one who carries the broomwhisk, intended as an instrument of punishment for naughty boys and girls (mostly boys), as well as the sack with goodies. The sack contains ginger-nuts which he liberally strews across rooms or even streets, and gingerbread men aptly called *taai-taai*, literally translated as tough-tough. The sack also contains presents for children who have shown good behaviour throughout the year. It always amazed me how many of us qualified, knowing full well that

usually our parents found little reason to commend us for our behaviour. Sometimes Black Pete threatens to stuff an extremely naughty boy in his sack and take him back to Spain, but Sinterklaas almost always intervenes, especially if the little boy promises to shape up.

Black Pete represents the historical fact that in the eighth century, Spain was overrun by the Moors, a Moslem people with swarthy complexion from Northern Africa. Although I think that climbing up and down chimneys has something to do with his dark complexion too. Especially in later centuries these Moors were looked down upon by Spanish people and it is not hard to guess why Black Pete ended up with the lousy job that he did. I mean, who would want to run behind a horse for the rest of his life and deal with snotty kids.

When you think of it, this whole business of Sinterklaas is a hodgepodge of different traditions. The fact that Sinterklaas rides a dapple-grey horse across roofs seems to have come from the Germanic myth of Odin (Wodan who rode his fleetfooted steed Sleipnir through the skies in order to fertilize the fields or simply raise Cain with his fellow hunters. So here we have it: a legend that combines a Christian saint with a Moslem servant and a Germanic horse and the purpose of it all is a little moralistic humanism that rewards good behaviour and punishes bad behaviour.

Of course, as a child, I was never much impressed by this Sinterklaas business. My father, who operated a beauty salon in our town, also rented out Sinterklaas costumes and provided the necessary make-up expertise. So it was not uncommon for us kids to see one Sinterklaas leave the premises and another return after his job was done at one or another party. One of the two costumes my Dad rented out was our own, made by Mom, and was always lying around in one of the bedroom closets. The staff and mitre were stashed away in an attic corner. In other words, we had ample opportunity to play Sinterklaas even in mid-July. It's hard to believe in Sinterklaas in that kind of an environment.

A Dutch comedian once described how another Dutch kid lost his faith in

the saintly proceedings. The Sinterklaas that visited the family one year was wearing a red velour table cloth that came close to making him look like a dignified bishop. What threw the little kid for a loop, however, was a familiar ringmark on the Saint's back that reminded him of his father's ashtray. Another strange give-away of family get-togethers was that usually one of the uncles was missing.

But believe in it or not, the yearly visit of the good bishop is appreciated by young and old as a time of good fellowship and happy surprises. I never forget the time that I myself had to play the role of Black Pete. A wealthy family in our town had commissioned a Sinterklaas to come to their family celebration to hand out gifts to kids. But there was no Black Pete to accompany the good Saint. My Dad decided at the last moment to throw me into the deal as Black Pete. I was quickly dressed up and blackened. My lips and the corners of my eyes were painted red. To this day I don't know who Sinterklaas was. We never exchanged so much as a word. I remember handing out gifts to a couple of spoiled brats and receiving a silver guilder from the grandmother, who was watching the proceedings from her bedside.

There are two things that I like about the celebration of Sinterklaas. In my time, at least, it was fairly non-commercial. The actual anticipation lasted no more than a week or two. None of this "only 46 shopping days left before Christmas, a purely religious holiday in Holland. Nobody is trying to get Christ back into Christmas because Christmas is unthinkable without him.

Sinterklaas is a family day where kids especially are singled out for attention and Christmas is a day of going to church and remembering that Christ was born to bring hope to a troubled world. You might say that Sinterklaas stresses the horizontal relationships between God and man. Both of them imply each other in one way or another. Together they reinforce the idea that God loves people and wants them to love both him and each other. Not a bad combination of things, when you think of it, even in 1981.

The song, translated

See yonder the steamboat returning from Spain.
It brings us Saint Nicholas; I see him again.
His horse keeps on prancing the deck up and down,
And flags are a-flutter along the ship's crown.

His servant stands ready and shouts with a boom:
"A good child gets candy; a bad one, the broom."
Say kids, do you see that? a gingerbread man!
I think I will eat him as soon as I can.

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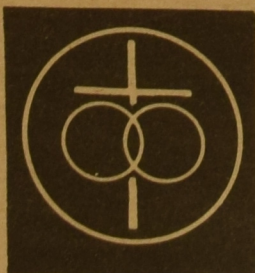
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More joy in heaven

by Wally Goossen

The shadow flames danced in the corners of the darkened living room leaping from the floor to the ceiling in macabre distortions. Outside the wall-to-wall front window wind-tossed snowflakes whirled to earth in the utter stillness of night.

The Robinson family sat quietly in front of the fireplace each contemplating the next day - Christmas!

Ten-year-old Paul shattered the stifling silence.

"Why can't we go to see Grandpa this year?"

"Quiet!" snarled his father.

"I don't want to talk about it anymore! You know very well why!"

"But dear, the children! It is Christmas after all. And he is your father."

Frank Robinson leaned forward in his favourite armchair and stared at the carpet. A black lock of hair fell over his left eye. Paul and Jenny who were sitting at the ends of the hearth glanced at each other hopefully.

Tina Robinson, blond, frail and pretty stood silhouetted against the flames holding her breath as her husband struggled.

"No! I'm not going to apologize! And I'm not going over there!"

"Please Dad. I want to see grandpa," pleaded Jenny who was a year younger than Paul.

Her father sat motionless, his big hands gripping the chair, his feet firmly planted.

"Frank maybe it wasn't his fault. Maybe your mother wanted it that way."

Frank jumped up and paced before the fireplace as his huge shadow moved across the ceiling struggling with itself as he struggled with himself.

"I don't believe it. She always said that when she died she would leave me enough so I could open a bicycle shop if I didn't have one already. She knew how I hated construction work. It's his fault. That overzealous fanatic talked her into giving it to an orphanage on the other side of the world. Orphanage, my foot. Some two-faced clergyman is lining his pockets with it now."

"Besides - he hasn't invited us yet!"

He slumped back into the chair and stared at the fire.

"Frank, just because you were cheated once when you were a teenager doesn't mean they are all like that. You mustn't be so cynical. And he never invites us; hasn't for the last ten years. But he's expecting us."

"Well, we're not going this year. It was mostly for Mom's sake that I went till now. Dad and I never got along well."

A bitter silence again engulfed the Robinson home. In another corner stood a tall evergreen burdened with

trimmings and blinking lights. At the very top was a big white angel. From across the street the faint voices of carolers could be heard. The gloom in the Robinson house was anything but holy.

Tina watched the shadows playing on her husband's contorted face. She sighed deeply. She could do nothing. But she couldn't call Grandpa either. Maybe Frank would change his mind in the morning.

"Well," she gasped at last, "off to bed with you two. It's ten o'clock. You'll want to get up early tomorrow and open your presents."

"I don't want any presents!" screamed Paul and dashed up the stairs not believing he could have uttered these words on Christmas eve.

"Me neither!" yelled Jenny and ran after him.

Tina looked at her husband who glanced at her quickly and shifted his gaze to the floor again avoiding her imploring eyes.

Paul could not sleep.

He turned and tossed and finally lay quietly on his back, his black head sticking out from under his quilt, and thought about his grandpa.

How he loved the old man with his long, white beard. Whenever the family visited him he would fling open the door. As he towered over them he would boom: "My, who have we here? What a nice surprise!"

He did this even when he was expecting them. His big blue eyes would dance merrily from Paul to Jenny who would rush at him and throw their arms around his thick neck. In other years their rotund little

grandma would be standing behind him smiling, waiting her turn. But she had died in October. Now it would only be Grandpa - all alone.

And tonight, Christmas eve, he would be up all night preparing for the Robinson's visit as he did every year. He was not aware of the extent of his son's bitterness. His all night vigils had begun when Frank himself was only ten. Grandma had a gall bladder operation that year. It ate up all their savings. There was no money for store bought gifts. Grandpa and Grandma set about making gifts for their eight children.

By Christmas eve all but Frank's gift were ready. So his father stayed up all night making him a beautiful sleigh.

It was the best Christmas the family had ever had. After that each year Grandpa stayed up the night before Christmas and made a gift for one member of the family just to remind him of that difficult but wonderful year.

This year it was Paul's turn to get the gift.

Laying in the darkness of the breathless night, the snow whirling past his bedroom window Paul closed his eyes and remembered his Grandpa's house.

It was a huge, old, white, frame farm house. It stood on a slight rise at the end of a long willow-lined lane, the moon and the stars watching over it with special care as the night nestled it in its protective arms.

The house was dark except for one large window near the front door where a man's head with a huge white beard could

be seen from the road rocking back and forth.

Paul sighed deeply. He knew that was just what the house looked like right now, that Grandpa was rocking by that window quite unaware that his heart was to be broken in a few hours.

Paul cried a little but he knew it was no use. Being unable to sleep he turned on the tiny TV set at the end of his bed. The grey picture sputtered and quavered and finally fell into focus as the sound came on. Paul snatched at the volume button and turned the sound down.

It was a Christmas program telecast from the big church in the city nearby. The church was packed with happy worshippers. Paul wondered why his parents never took him to church. Grandpa was always talking to his Dad about it.

"...the real meaning of Christmas." He had heard that phrase often. What did it mean? He listened.

"God loved us so much that He came all the way from heaven as a baby to be with us. How many people will not even go across town this year to go to church or to see family or friends because they don't celebrate Christmas or are angry at someone."

Paul listened in astonishment. If only his father were listening. He turned the set off, deep in thought.

"All the way from heaven, and a baby too! Why Grandpa only lives twenty miles away and I'm ten!"

Suddenly he jumped out of bed, dressed quickly and dashed for the door. He stopped abruptly. Wait! No one must hear him. Slowly he opened the door. All was dark. He took off his shoes again and stole across the hall to Jenny's room. She, too, was awake.

"What's the matter," she whispered as she sat up in bed. "Jenny..." and he ex-

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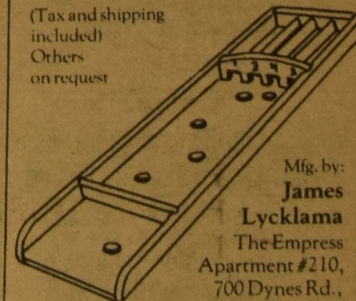
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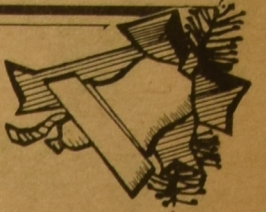
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More joy in heaven

plained his plan to her. She was eager to go along.

"It'll only take a couple of hours by bike. We can visit with Grandpa for a while and get back home for breakfast," assured Paul.

"But I don't have a bike yet. I can't ride," protested Jenny.

"You can sit on the back of mine on the seat Dad fixed up for me. I can peddle us both."

Jenny was dressed in minutes and they were off down the carpeted stairs to the front door where they slipped on their shoes, out the door ever so carefully and into the night.

It was a gentle night, a night of good will. The children's hearts leaped with joy at the thought of seeing their grandfather.

"Boy, will he be surprised!" they agreed.

The road to Grandpa's wound through the countryside with gentle curves and rises and dips. Paul peddled on bravely, standing up on the peddles now and then to get more leverage as Jenny clasped her arms around his waist.

Although they were a year apart they were often mistaken for twins. They both had the black hair and hazel eyes of their father. Often they wore similar clothing. Tina had always wanted twins.

Here and there was a farm house at the end of a lane. On and on they rode in silence. Paul was working too hard to speak. Now and then they paused and sat down at the roadside but it was too cold to rest long.

"What time is it?" asked Jenny after what seemed like hours.

"I don't know," replied Paul. "I forgot my watch. But we must be half way there, anyway."

Jenny shuddered. Half way! The cold was beginning to pierce her ribs. She pulled the hood of her parka over her head and Paul did likewise.

Paul was standing on the peddles struggling up a small rise when they heard a loud crack. He lost his footing and the bike lurched to the side and fell over. The children

sprawled on the gravel road. Little stones dug into their elbows and hands as they scrambled to get up.

"Oh great!" exclaimed Paul in dismay, "the chains broken."

"Now we'll have to walk," wailed Jenny. "It'll take hours! We'll freeze!"

"Well, maybe we can hitch a ride," consoled Paul.

But the empty road stretching to both horizons promised nothing. They parked the bike behind a large tree and began walking.

"We better call Mom and Dad when we get there. We won't be home for breakfast. They'll be frantic if they find out we're missing. We should have left a note just in case. I hope no one takes the bike," he added as an afterthought.

"Paul, I'm scared!"

"I am too," he admitted.

They walked on in silence. The minutes seemed eternal - around one curve then another. Up one rise, down one hill and up another. There seemed to be no end.

"Paul," gasped Jenny, "I'm getting awfully cold." She shivered as she said it. Her nose was running and her cheeks were red.

"Yeah, me too," said Paul who looked and felt no better.

"And it's worse for me because I was sweating. Its beginning to snow harder too," he observed.

An hour passed but Grandpa's house seemed just as far as when they started out. They had no idea where they were.

"Paul, look!"

They had come to another crossroad.

"Jenny, we've got to turn sometime. But when?"

"I don't know. I know we have to turn somewhere near Grandpa's place like Dad always does but I don't know where we are or when to turn."

"Yeah," he agreed. "The road, the fields, everything looks so much alike. When Dad drives I don't pay much attention."

"Well we better turn or we'll go right past," answered Jenny. They decided to turn right. It wasn't long before they realized their mistake.

"Jenny! Look at that huge boulder in that field. Its as big as me! I've never seen that before. I think we went the wrong way."

They turned to retrace their steps. But at the crossing they again were unable to decide which way to go. It had begun to snow heavily now. Snow was building up on the road and it became more difficult to see beyond the edge of the road.

On and on they walked. The snow was driving harder and harder. Tears were forming in their eyes and freezing on their cheeks.

"Take my hand," ordered Paul. "It's getting harder to see. We mustn't get separated."

"Oh Paul we're lost!" cried Jenny. "We'll never see Mom and Dad and Grandpa again!"

"Sure we will, Jenny," he shouted as if trying to penetrate the heavy curtain of snow that surrounded them on all sides. At last Jenny could go no further.

"I can't," she screamed. "I can't. I'm tired and freezing!"

Paul looked at his sister's frozen face. Her nose and cheeks were colourless. He knew his must be too. He could think of no comforting words. He embraced her. He too was frightened.

"Jenny," he whispered in her ear, "I think we're going to die!"

Her scream pierced the suffocating snow. He knew he shouldn't have said it but he too needed someone to talk to, to tell his innermost fears.

"Jenny what happens to people when they die?"

It was no time for tact. Courage was impossible. He was after all only ten himself.

Jenny continued to wail, hot tears streaming down her face turning to ice at the tip of her nose and chin as she repeatedly wiped the snow out of her eyes.

"I heard a preacher once on TV say that Jesus died for our sins, that that was part of the

Christmas story too. Jenny are we sinners?"

She stopped howling and looked her brother over as if she had seen him for the first time. "I don't know. I don't know what a sinner is. But I did tell Mom I was finished my school work yesterday when I wasn't."

"And I stole an apple at Sam's fruit market on Saturday," confessed Paul.

Standing in the blizzard, alone in the universe, uncertain which way to go they considered eternity.

"Jenny. Do you think if we ask God to take us to heaven if we die that He will?"

"I don't care! I don't want to die! I don't want to die!"

"Jenny, Jenny!" Paul shook her hard. Her fear was frightening him.

"Jenny, let's pray. I've never prayed before but..." She nodded in agreement but wept on without consolation.

"You pray," she stammered.

Paul clinging to his sister uttered an awkward prayer.

"Jesus, if Jenny and I are sinners, please forgive us and take us to heaven if we - when we die."

Jenny stopped crying. They stared at each other and waited. Nothing happened.

"What do we do now?" she asked.

"I don't know," he admitted.

Continued on page 14



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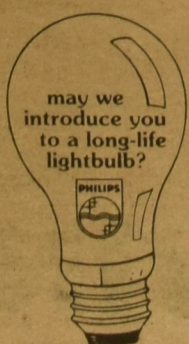
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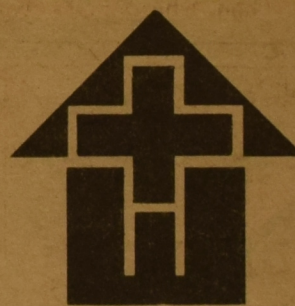
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ted.
"Wait Jenny! Do you hear something?"
"I'm not sure. It sounds like singing or is it just the wind?"
"I don't know," said Paul, but I remember the preacher said that all the angels in heaven sing when one sinner repents."
"Paul do you think?"
"I don't know. Maybe it's just the wind. Then maybe it isn't!"
"If God would only help us find Grandpa's house," she pleaded.
They embraced again in the

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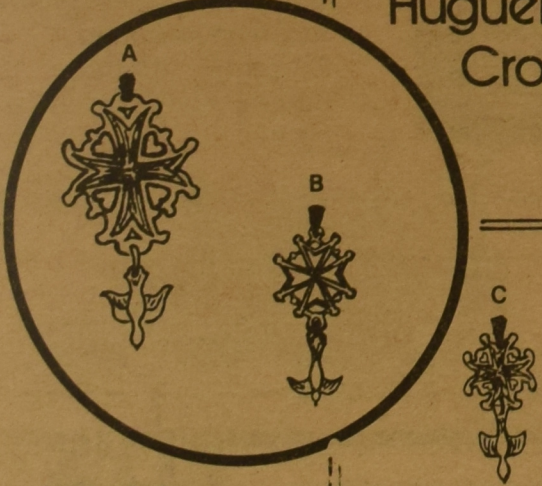
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silent violence of the bitter night, utterly desolate, utterly hopeless.
Christmas eve and they were about to die! It was hours since they had thought about the packages under the tree at home. Even their parents and Grandfather seemed vague memories as the cruel grandeur or nature overwhelmed their frail bodies and frail spirits.
The snow crystals that had been their joy on previous Christmas mornings raged against them now shutting them off from all of creation.
Now a wind was stirring itself; gently at first then gathering force until it was howling angrily at the white world.
Peace and good will to all men - and children!
"Jenny we've got to keep going! We just have to walk before the wind. We can't walk against it or sideways. It'll blow us over. May we'll find a farm house yet!"
"Okay!" she agreed knowing all was futile.
They stumbled on, holding hands desperately, half running, half walking. The wind drove them on relentlessly giving no opportunity for rest. After a long while it shifted direction and so did they.
They had no idea how long they had been walking when Paul jerked Jenny's hand and screamed, "Jenny look!" They were walking a few feet from a wire fence. "Come on!" cried Paul. He put his hand on the fence. "If we follow it we'll find a farm!"
It was not long before they

found the end of the fence and the beginning of a lane. The wind shifted direction again and pushed them on.
"Look, Jenny!"
A few feet ahead of them was a square patch of light with a head and a huge beard rocking back and forth.
Grandpa did not greet them with a merry twinkle in his eyes. "My God," he gasped and stood speechless for a few seconds.
"Grandpa let us in!" clamoured Jenny half delirious.
He stepped aside and a stiff gust of wind and snow burst into the room as the children tumbled over the threshold and dropped to the floor both shivering and crying.
It took an hour before wet clothes were removed, Jenny was bedded down in the guest room and Paul in Grandpa's bed; the doctor called and horrified parents notified. No one thought about Christmas dinner.
Before falling asleep Paul managed with great difficulty to explain the circumstances of their visit.
Later as he rocked by the window and continued work on the flute he was making for Paul, Grandpa paused occasionally to wipe his nose.
"So my son is still angry with me and won't celebrate Christmas with me!"
"Love never fails," he recalled from the Scripture.
He thought again about Frank and dropped his weary hands on his lap and pulled the lapels of his dressing gown tight around his neck.
He couldn't go on. As he

rocked he stared out the window at the driving snow which had slowed down just a little. Tomorrow Frank would come but not for dinner.
The telephone startled him.
"Frank?" He could say no more. There was a long silence at the other end.
"Dad...I called back to..." He wept softly.
Grandpa Robinson listened and pulled his big blue handkerchief out of one pocket and wiped his nose again and the corner of one eye.
"Dad, I've been thinking about the kids...they could have died, and...well you're not so young and we've lost Mom."
He broke off again and sobbed quietly.
"Dad...I think I know how Grandma felt about those orphans. They have no one... I've taken you all for granted, especially the kids...and you. Can you forgive me?"
Grandpa Robinson coughed into the phone and tried to control his voice.
"Merry Christmas, son. The roads should be clear by ten. The snow is slowing down already. See you for dinner. Remember I'm a fantastic cook. And God willing the kids can get up for a while too!"
Frank laughed heartily.
"Right after church!"
Grandpa almost dropped the phone. Then smiling he replaced the receiver and glanced up at the ceiling.
"Yeah, I know. I feel like singing too!"



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Song of songs

We saw a singer pass one day,
Came through our town, strode by our way.

A faded handkerchief and blue,
Wrapped up sweet visions which he threw
Down by our feet. Fresh flowers grew
Upon his path. We heard him say,

"I have the song of songs. Look here."
While sonnets tumbled far and near.
Some children laughed and followed him,
Until at last the day grew dim,
Still, far ahead, we heard him sing,
And all the good seemed twice as dear.

The pebbles seemed alive, to cry,
The desert bloomed that once was dry.
We saw this all within his wake,
How ev'ry moment seemed to take
A century. And for his sake,
It seemed that storms were passing by.

We marvelled days and finally
Left home and friends. We had to see
Where he had gone. The air that day
Still echoed notes upon our way,
Still echoed the sonata stray,
That he had sung in harmony.

Then suddenly, our youth was done,
And we, quite weary with the sun,
Sat down to rest. The coming night
Lay stark before. The only light
Cast steadily to dimming sight,
A star on black - a star - just one.

We closed our eyes, sat finitely,
Weeping at our mortality.
But, oh that star, and all who saw
Were kindled with a hope. The straw
That pointed to eternity.

It was in Ephratha we rose
Keeping our course. God only knows,
For we have often reasoned long,
Why this sweet light should make us strong,
Sweeping about us as a song
Of never-ending lover's prose.

So to the singer's song we came,
Immanuel - symphonic name.
We knelt. We died. We live. We see
Those crossroads at eternity
That smile at our mortality,
Inviting us to do the same.

Christine Farenhorst Praamsma



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Dutch

Gezocht en gevonden

Het kindeke gezocht

Alles wat de Bijbel ons zegt over die Oosterse wijzen heeft een eigen bekringing en een bijzondere aantrekkingskracht. Rondom hen zweeft de wijde oneindigheid. Waar komen ze vandaan? We weten het niet precies. We zien hen plotseling komen als een paar vage stippen aan de verre horizon, en dan in eens staan ze in Jeruzalem, en gaan als 'zoekers van het kindeke' naar Bethlehem, en vinden de koning der Joden. En als ze gevonden hebben verwijnen ze weer even spoorloos als ze gekomen zijn, maar langs een andere weg.

Naast de vele wegen naar Bethlehem trekken zij hun weg, en vermeerderen het getal der wegen die leiden naar de geboren koning. Ook daarin schittert de heerlijkheid van Gods daden, de roem van zijn verkiezende genade, het licht van zijn lokkende liefde. De wegen naar God zijn als de zonnestralen. Eindeloos zijn ze in veelheid, maar ze ontmoeten elkaar in een punt, een brandpunt. Nu de kribbe, straks het kruis, en later het open graf. En ten diepste: de Zoon van God!

De oosterse nachten van de Babylonische en Perzische landen zijn geheimzinnig en wonderlijk. Zo worden ze daar beleefd. De sterren hangen daar voor de oosterse wijzen als een schat van hemelse vruchten. De hemel trekt hun aandacht. Ze kunnen er niet los van komen. Ze leven in de vaste overtuiging dat ieder gebeuren op aarde eerst in de sterrenwereld wordt aangeduid.

En dan komt er een nacht waarin zij een ster de banen der planeten zien doorkruisen. Dat grijpt deze wijzen aan met diepe ontroering. Een vreemde ster. Wij verdiepen ons er niet in wat voor ster dat is geweest. Het is ook erg moeilijk een natuurlijke verklaring te geven. Maar de Bijbel zegt uitdrukkelijk dat deze wijzen die ster in verband hebben gebracht met de geboorte van de koning der Joden. Ze hebben zijn ster zien opkomen aan de hemel.

Hoe is het mogelijk? Werken hier na gedachten uit de joodse ballingschap? Werkt hier na de invloed van Daniel die eenmaal voorzitter was van het college der Babylonische magiers? Hoe dan ook, wat algemene openbaring, met een bijzonder teken, en wat zwak licht van bijzondere openbaring, en de magiers gaan aan het zoeken, in de richting van het westen, omdat God hen eerst zocht.

Achter dat zoeken van de wijzen werkt goddelijke openbaring. De oude christelijke kerk noemde dit zoeken van de magiers: het feest der verschijning. Dat wil zeggen: achter hun verschijning in Jeruzalem ligt de verschijning van Christus in Zijn ster aan de hemel. En dan wordt dat verschijnen door het woord van God dat Israël naar het oosten bracht verklaard. Zo brengt uiteindelijk Gods openbaring deze mensen aan het zoeken. En de ster lokt hen de lange stoffige weg naar Jeruzalem op.

Ja, de magiers gaan zoeken! Ze zeggen niet, nu ja die ster kennen we niet, die hebben we nog nooit gezien. We hebben er wel wat van gehoord en het zal wel wat bijzonders betekenen, maar het westen is zo ver, we zullen maar thuisblijven. Nee, als God Zijn heerlijkheid openbaart doet Hij dat om de mens aan het zoeken te brengen. En zoeken dat is van onze plaats gaan, op weg gaan, in verwondering gaan vragen: wat zou dit toch kunnen zijn?



PALESTINA VANDAAG uit „Beloften van Jezus", Kok, Kampen.

Zoeken dat is in beweging komen, naar God toegaan, naar zijn stad, naar de plaats waar Hij te vinden is en vragend op weg gaan: waar is de geboren koning der Joden? De heidenen rukken aan uit het oosten. God is bezig te werken over de grenzen van Israël. Het kind in de kribbe kan alleen maar gezien worden tegen de achtergrond van psalm 87, die psalm die zo vol is van een geweldig verlangen, een uitzien naar de volle heerlijkheid van de Messiaanse tijd, waarin de volken met Israël geschreven staan op dezelfde rol.

Als God deze psalm in vervulling laat gaan dan brengt Hij de heidenen aan het zoeken. Dan lokt Hij ze door het licht der natuur, door een ster, dan trekt Hij ze naar het westen. Dan gaat er iets leven in de harten van de magiers en ze sturen na een lange vermoeiende reis hun rijdieren door de poort van Jeruzalem.

Het was een lange tocht. En de vraag leeft in hun hart: waar is de koning die geboren is? de koning van het westland, de koning der Joden, waar? Ze zoeken, en in Jeruzalem is er meer dan de ster. Daar schijnt het licht der bijzondere openbaring, daar horen ze uit de mond van Israëls leidlieden, dat ze naar Bethlehem moeten gaan. En dan helpt de ster ze ook weer. En geleid door bijzondere en algemene openbaring, met een bijzonder teken er bij, komen ze waar ze wezen moeten. Hun zoeken wordt vinden. Wie Hem zoekt vindt Hem.

Het kindeke gevonden

De tocht naar Bethlehem is een kruisgang. De werkelijkheid is dat er een koning voor de Joden, ja voor de wereld geboren is. Maar er zijn bijna geen Joden, en er is geen land om Hem te ontvangen. In Davids koningstad is de geboorte van de Koning niet opgemerkt. De Magiers kunnen Hem

daar niet vinden. Er is in Jeruzalem geen feestgedruis over het geboren Koningskind. Er is geen residentie voor de Koningszoon. Er is zelfs geen Jood die de wijzen voor gaat naar Bethlehem. De ster moet er zelfs weer aan te pas komen.

Het Jodendom in Jeruzalem heeft zich omhangen met het wijde kleed der orthodoxie en de tradities der vaderen, maar het heeft de Messias niet verwacht, noch ontvangen. Wie werkelijk op zoek gaat, wie dwars door alle weerstanden heen blijft zoeken en vragen: die vindt. De wijzen hebben de boodschap van Gods Woord ontvangen, met de geweldige weerstand er bij dat degenen die hen het Woord gaven, zelf niet overeenkomstig dat Woord handelden, en er blijkbaar ook niets van verwachten.

De wijzen waagden het echter met het Woord der profetie, en toen kwam de ster het Woord bevestigen. En ze vonden het Kindeke! Toch was het weer een kruisgang. Ook in Bethlehem was er niets van paleisheerlijkheid. Ze vonden zeker geen koningin des hemels in Maria. Een paar doodgewone mensen. Geen koningsmoeder van aanzien, geen koning aan haar zijde. Een paar mensen uit de arbeidersklasse, een eenvoudige omgeving. De Koning der Joden in een tweederangsstadje van Judea, net nog groot genoeg om mee te tellen, maar niet in het voorgestelde. Door het geloof hebben de magiers de eenvoud van dit koningspaar verdragen, hebben ze de armoede van deze prins uit Davids huis aanvaard. Het moest ook geloofd worden. En de dingen die geloofd moeten worden zijn altijd de ongelukkigste. En ze hebben hun schatten gegeven: goud, wierook en myrrhe. En ze zijn neergeknield voor de Heiland der wereld. Ze hebben gevonden! En dat was een blijde ervaring.

Het gaat er nog steeds om dat er gezocht en gevonden wordt. We moeten Gods Woord geloven, we moeten leven naar dat Woord, en op weg gaan naar de Christus, om Hem dan zeker te vinden. We zullen dit moeten verstaan: de bitterheid dat er voor Christus geen plaats was in zijn eigen stad, en dat er voor Zijn evangelie in ons hart geen aanknopingspunt is. Het gaat om dat nederige: Jezus vinden in de armoede, de schamelheid van Bethlehem. En dan zelf het beste dat we hebben afstaan.

Is het niet geweldig dat die wijzen uit het oosten neerknielden voor Jezus, die ze gevonden hadden na een lange vermoeiende tocht? Verstaan wij deze wijze van vinden? Er is reden voor deze vraag wanneer we denken aan het zo vaak ontbreken van een

werkelijk bloeiend getuigend vruchtbaar geloofsleven. Wij hebben Gods Woord. Dat hadden de Joden in Jeruzalem toen ook. Als wij echter tot die gang naar Bethlehem niet bereid zijn, dan vinden we de Christus niet.

Als wij tot die gang van zelfverloochening, tot kruisiging van onze eigen gedachten, tot het luisteren naar Gods stem niet bereid zijn, dan vinden we Christus niet. Dat moet ons aangrijpen. Wij kunnen in de kerk komen, wij kunnen de Schrift lezen, wij kunnen de Schrift onderzoeken, wij kunnen anderen de weg naar Bethlehem wijzen en zeggen: nog zoveel kilometer en dan bent u er, de Bijbel zegt het zus en zo, en dan toch zelf de weg naar Bethlehem niet gaan, en niet knielen voor het Kindeke.

De wijzen zochten en vonden! En dat blijft het patroon, ook voor onze tijd. Er moet naar Jezus gezocht, om Jezus gevraagd worden. En het Woord van God, de Bijbel, moet worden geopend, gelezen en geloofd worden, want Jezus heeft gezegd: Onderzoekt de Schriften, want die zijn het die van Mij getuigen.

Hebt u werkelijk de Christus Gods gevonden? Heeft Zijn Woord uw hart geraakt ook toen alles zo anders ging dan u verwachtte? Toen de magiers Jeruzalem de Davidsstad voorbij moesten, hebben ze dat toch gedaan omdat Gods Woord het zei: U moet in Bethlehem zijn! En meer hebben wij niet nodig dan dat op ons aandringende woord: ga toch naar Bethlehem! De wijzen zeiden maar: wij hebben Zijn ster gezien, en ze konden na Jeruzalem zeggen: we hebben Zijn Woord gehoord, en later konden ze zeggen: wij hebben Hemzelf gevonden, en gezien en... aangebeden!

Het wordt straks weer Kerstfeest. We zien niets meer in de lucht, geen ster spreekt speciaal van Jezus Christus, maar we hebben Zijn Woord, en in dat Woord ontmoeten we Hem, en wij moeten dan toch ook kunnen zeggen: door Zijn Woord hebben we Hem gevonden, en we hebben in Hem geloofd als onze Zaligmaker. In de geest buigen we ons voor Hem neer, en aanbidden Hem, want wij weten het uit Zijn mond: zalig zijn zij die niet gezien (geen ster en geen Jezus) en toch geloofd hebben! De Bijbel geeft ons zoveel oor en ooggetuigen, wij moeten wel doof en blind zijn, als we op het Kerstfeest niet kunnen zeggen: Ik heb Hem ook gevonden, net zo goed als de wijzen, en ik verwacht Hem nu op de wolken, dan zal ik Hem ook mogen zien. Dat zal het grootste verschijningsfeest zijn waarnaar Gods volk uitziet.

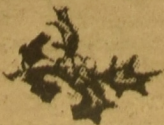
J. Van Harmelen

Op U, mijn Heiland blijf ik hopen

Vervul, o Heiland, het verlangen,
waarmee mijn hart uw komst verbeidt!
Ik wil in ootmoed U ontvangen,
mijn ziel en zinnen zijn bereid.
Blijf in uw liefde mij bewaren,
waar om mij heen de wereld woedt.
O, mocht ik uwe troost ervaren:
doe intocht, Heer, in mijn gemoed!

Gezang 118

uit „Lietboek voor de kerken"



Dutch

Arie en Katrien door Arie Dof

Kerstfeestelijkheden

Dit jaar hebben Diny en Bill de wedstrijd gewonnen. Ieder jaar voeren onze kinderen een vriendschappelijke wedstrijd over de vraag, waar onze familie dit jaar het Kerstfeest zal vieren. Dit jaar was de competitie niet erg sterk, ook al, omdat Katrien en ik twee jaar geleden Kerstfeest hebben gevierd bij onze kinderen in Vancouver en verleden jaar bij het jonge gezin van mijn dochter in Ontario.

Zoon Willem, onze oudste, en zijn vrouw hadden dus de niet gering te achten eer, om de familie Dof te gast te hebben en de gebraden kalkoen te delen met vele bloedverwanten, die allemaal sterke magen en een gezonde eetlust hebben. Slechts de zwaarste vogels komen voor deze gebeurtenis in aanmerking.

Evenals andere jaren hadden Katrien en ik reeds diverse kerstavonden afgewerkt, toen de grote dag aanbrak. We waren derhalve niet onbekend met de traditionele kerstzangen en leden zelfs aan een zekere oververzadiging. Soms kun je in die dagen voor Kerstfeest zo echt zin krijgen in een juichend Paaslied. Maar een paaslied geeft geen pas in de tweede helft van December.

25 December: Tijdens het ontbijt merkt Katrien met heimwee in haar stem op, dat het deze kerstmorgen heel wat rustiger is dan vroeger, toen de kinderen nog thuis waren. Die hadden op kerstmorgen weinig tijd voor ontbijt, vervuld als ze waren van de geschenken, die ze de vorige

avond hadden ontvangen. Ja, de tijd staat niet stil. Nu zijn we samen. Niet dikwijls, maar op een morgen als deze mis je een beetje de drukte van een gezin.

De kerk is bijna vol als we binnentreden. Direct merkt de kerkganger, dat het feest is vandaag: veelkleurige banieren hangen opzij van de preekstoel. Er is een grote kerstboom met talloze lichtjes, heel veel versiering in groen en rood, en de gelovigen nemen er voldaan kennis van. Er schijnt niemand te zijn, die nog principiële bezwaren heeft tegen de kerstversierselen in de kerk; niemand, die meer afgeeft „op dat wereldse gedoe”; niemand die meer dreigt met afscheiding of doleantie vanwege kerstboom en mistletoe.

Ook de organist blijkt in een pulke stemming te verkeren. Vrolijk klinkende variaties op bekende kerstliederen strooit hij uit over de hoorders, die, veelal tegen hun gewoonte in, de gesprekken staken; meeluisteren en soms meeneuriën.

Als het tien uur is, verschijnt de voorganger, gevolgd door een aantal ouderlingen en diakenen, die weldra gewikkeld zijn in moeizame pogingen, om hun vrouwen en gezinnen te vinden in de volle kerk. Toen we nog aparte banken voor de ambtsdragers hadden, was dat vertwijfelde zoeken niet nodig.

Een ogenblik is alles stil, dan horen we de prille stemmen van jonge kinderen, de meisjes en jongens van de



zondagschool, die in processie door de kerk gaan met een kaars in de hand onder de gewijde en vrolijke tonen van het aloude „O, come all ye faithful.” Er lopen ook een

paar van onze kleinkinderen bij. Katrien snuit haar neus van ontroering.

De dienst kan nu beginnen. We missen onze elgen predikant vandaag. Zijn oude

moeder, die in California in een rusthuis woonde, is verleden week overleden. Samen met zijn vrouw is hij naar het zuiden vertrokken voor de begrafenis, en het droevige met het aangename verenigend, blijven ze tot 28 December weg. Maar geen nood, we hebben een voorganger vanmorgen. Hij is nog wel niet helemaal een dominee, want hij heeft zijn studies nog niet voltooid en dient als hulp-prediker in een naburige gemeente onder toezicht van de predikant en kerkeraad aldaar, maar hij is bevoegd om de dienst te leiden en de schare toe te spreken. Na Schriftlezingen, gemeentezang en koorzang maakt hij van deze gelegenheid ruimschoots gebruik.

Hij is een jonge man, misschien 25 jaar, maar zijn droefgeestige uiterlijk doet hem ouder lijken. Hij werpt een sombere blik op de verzamelde gelovigen en met omfloerste stem deelt hij mee, dat de tekst van zijn kerstpreek Jo

Vervolg op pag. 18

Persoverzicht

• Een dodelijk vermoeide Trudeau met zware zakken onder zijn ogen viel voor een ogenblik uit zijn gewoonlijke rol, reikte diep in zijn hart, en zei eens even flink waar het op stond. Het gebeurde in Vancouver waar Trudeau een groep van zijn partijgenoten de les las en zei: Canada komt vóór de provincies! Amen en mijn welgemeend applaus. Kunnen we allemaal in onze zak steken. Heel beslist ook onze vriend Levesque die nog steeds met dat waanidee van onafhankelijkheid rondloopt en die helemaal op z'n dooie eentje nog even de grondwetvoorstellen probeert te torpederen omdat daarin Quebec niet voor Canada gesteld werd. En iemand die het ook wel eens mag horen is onze kameraad Broadbent die maar steeds dat nummertje afgezaagd socialisme blijft zingen. U weet wel dat bekende refrein van „Laten de rijken maar betalen.” Dat is holle demagogie waar geen mens verder mee komt. Het bracht natuurlijk wel een groot aantal kameraden op de been om te demonstreren in Ottawa tegen de slechte toestanden in ons land. We zien tegenwoordig hele zwermen van betweters die zich luiddruchtig en vooral laatdunkend uitspreken over de recente begroting. Iedereen zwamt daarover alsof hij de wijsheid in pacht heeft. Vooral natuurlijk de oppositie-partijen. En wie denkt dat enige regering, welke dan ook, ooit bij toverslag de ekonomie honderentachtig graden kan doen omkeren hoeft maar even naar Reagan en Thatcher te zien om te weten dat dat niet waar is. In de industriële, Westerse landen hebben we allemaal een tikkie boven onze stand geleefd, en we plukken daar nu de wrange vruchten van. Iedereen die denkt dat er ekonomiese goocheltrucs zijn om de „tafeltje-dek-je-periode” met hocus pocus terug te brengen is, zoals onze kleermaker vroeger zei: mesjokke. De tijd van wie niet werkt zal ook niet eten, is gelukkig voorbij, maar de tijd van wie geen zin heeft om te werken zal toch wel lekker eten, is ook voorbij. „Het geld groeit niet op mijn rug” zei tante Katrien, en het groeit ook niet met protesten tegen de begroting. Er zal gewerkt moeten worden.

• Misschien kunnen we beginnen met wat

minder oorlogstuig te fabriceren. Zoals het er nu bij staat kunnen de Amerikanen met hun raketten geloof ik iedere Rus zo ongeveer twintig keer doden, en de Russen zijn in staat om iedere Amerikaan zo pakweg dertig keer van kant te maken. Eén keer is toch eigenlijk wel afdoende nietwaar? Wie zijn gezond verstand gebruikt weet dat die ene keer al onzin is, maar zover hebben we het in deze tegenwoordige tijd nog niet gebracht.

• Toch zit er wat beweging in de benadering van dat zondige vraagstuk. Brezhnev heeft tijdens een bezoek aan West-Duitsland wat water bij de wijn van zijn eerdere „njet” gedaan. Er openen zich mogelijkheden voor besprekingen. Ik hoop niet dat die generaal zonder sterren aan die besprekingen gaat deelnemen.

• Hoe angstwekkend het tegenwoordige wereldbeeld is bleek wel weer uit de grote demonstraties tegen kernbewapening die plaats vonden in Nederland. Duizenden demonstranten liepen in Den Haag en Amsterdam.

• De Arabieren kunnen het niet eens worden onder elkaar over het vredesplan van Saoedi Arabie, laat staan als de Israëlische regering er zich in gaat mengen. In Rusland hebben ze te kampen met gebrek aan graan en zuivelprodukten, en in Roemenie zijn brood en bloem op de bon gegaan.

• In Argentinië heeft de regering een nieuw bankbiljet uitgegeven: een miljoen pesos. In Canadese waarde is dat \$105. Mocht u dus ergens een geheime wens hebben om miljonnair te worden: u hoeft maar een reisje naar dat land te maken; even op het vliegveld \$105 inwisselen en u bent er. Je wordt er niet veel wijzer van maar het is toch even een rijk gevoel. Ik weet er van mee te praten, een tijdje geleden liep ik in België rond met bijna vijftig duizend franc in mijn zak. Het leek er net even op of ik rijk was. Totdat ik in pure fantasie mijn vrouw tracteerde op een etentje in een duur restaurant. Enfin rijke dominees hebben geen zin meer om preken te maken, en daarom is het maar beter dat we wat minder in de slappe was zitten.

Carl D. Tuyt

Een stalledeur

Een deur, een ingang van een stal is meestal laag, is meestal smal, en hij die in die stal wil gaan kan in zo'n deur niet rechtop staan. Wil hij toch binnengaan, dan lukt 't alleen als hij zich buigt en bukt.

Het vleesgeworden Godd'lijk woord vindt men niet door een brede poort maar door een deurtje van een stal, misschien, opdat elk weten zal, misschien opdat ook wij verstaan dat daar geen mens rechtop kan gaan.

Slechts hij die in ootmoedigheid, in groeiende verslagenheid, vol schuld nood en vol schaamte pijn de allerkleinste wel wil zijn, die is ontdaan van eigenwaan, die kan en mag naar binnen gaan.

En voor hem is van deze stal de deur niet meer te laag, te smal, maar eind'loos groot en maatloos wijd, de deur naar Gods barmhartigheid. Zijn nood, zijn zielsverbrijzeling wordt één en al verwondering.

J.v. Veen-Nusmeijer
in De Wekker



Dutch

Kerstfeestelijkheden

Vervolg van pag. 17

hannes 1:4 en 5 is, waar in het gaat over het licht der wereld, dat schijnt in de duisternis en de duisternis heeft het niet gegrepen.

Voorwaar, een kersttekst waar veel inzit en dus veel uitgehaald kan worden. Doch, indien de jeugdige prediker al blij is met het Kerstfeest, dan weet hij dat toch meesterlijk te verbergen, want op klagelijke toon weidt hij uit over de duisternis, die er vroeger reeds was, maar tegenwoordig nog veel meer. Een lange lijst van duistere zaken laat hij de revue passeren, zoals de honger in de wereld, de rassenhaat, de bewapeningswedloop, de pollutie, de oliecrisis, de inflatie, de werkloosheid enzovoort etcetera.

Met dreiging in zijn keel verklaart hij, dat het onze schuld is, dat president Reagan de neutronenbom wil gebruiken in geval van oorlog, en dat het te wijten is aan onze gierigheid, dat er zoveel honger is en dat het maar te hopen is, dat de kalkoenen, die we vandaag nog zullen eten, ons niet lekker zullen smaken gezien de wereldnood en de duisternissen. Voorwaar, aktuele prediking die aan duidelijkheid niets te wensen overlaat. Tegen het eind van de predikatie slaakt de jonge predikheer een serie diepe zuchten en verklaart dan, dat er nog enige hoop is, omdat de Heiland als het licht der wereld reddend verschenen is om de duisternis te doorbreken.

Alsof er niets ernstigs is gebeurd, begint vervolgens het koor „Joy to the world” te zingen. Na collecte en zegenbede verlaat de droefgeestige dienaar de kansel en is de dienst beëindigd. Weer laat de opgewekte organist de blijde klanken van kerstmelodieën door de kerk golven. Na de dienst is het enige kommentaar van Katrien: „Wanneer komt onze dominee weer terug?”

Daarna verzamelen we ons als familie ten huize van onze Bill. Het wordt een gezellig en feestelijk samenzijn. De jongste kinderen van Diny en Bill laten ons hun cadeautjes zien en Grandpa moet beloven, om, voordat hij huiswaarts gaat, deel te nemen aan een gezelschapspel, dat er duur en ingewikkeld uitziet en dat Grandpa ongetwijfeld zal verliezen.

Ook worden ons enige geschenken aangeboden. Ik ontvang mijn zoveelste fles met after shave lotion, die ik zorgvuldig in het daartoe bestemde doosje laat, om het bij mijn verzameling te voegen, en later weer eens aan een van mijn zonen cadeau te doen. Ook krijg ik een nieuwe das, een vuurrood monster, dat ik ook maar in de daartoe bestemde doos laat zitten met bepaalde onzelfzuchtige bedoelingen. Katrien verklaart blij te zijn met een sjaaltje en

een fles eau de cologne, Boldoot 4711.

Er zijn ook twee andere gasten, die niet tot de familie behoren. Ze hoeven niet aan ons te worden voorgesteld, want we hebben hen eerder ontmoet: de nieuwste aanwinst van Vietnamezen, de eersten van de tweede lichterling zogezegd, die onze kerk heeft laten overkomen. Ze zijn hier pas drie maanden en hebben buiten onze gemeenschap nog niet veel vrienden. Het schijnt, dat Vietnamezen hier in Canada niet veel samenkomsten, althans niet bij elkaar

blijven. Ze zijn niet zoals wij, toen we in Canada kwamen: meteen organiseren, verenigen vormen, kerken bouwen, scholen stichten. Neen, ze gaan meer in stilte hun eigen gang. Onze gasten vandaag zijn een aardig echtpaar van ongeveer 35 jaar. Hun oorspronkelijke namen waren Po Jan en Nan Tung Van Dong. Thans heten ze Paul en Nancy, en Van Dong hebben we maar zo gelaten; dat klinkt goed Hollands.

Met een brede grijns en diepe buiging komt Paul Van Dong op me af, en zegt:

„Merry Klistmas, Alle.” Het schijnt dat de meeste Vietnamezen op voet van oorlog leven met de letter r. Nancy maakt ook een diepe buiging, gepaard gaande met een welkend gegrinnik.

Nancy en Paul zijn geen christenen, maar doen onverdrotten aan onze christelijke activiteiten mee. Vanmorgen zijn ze in onze kerk geweest en met veel gebaren maken ze ons duidelijk, dat ze het heel mooi hebben gevonden. Zelfs de oordeelsaankondigingen van de sombere theologische student hebben ze met een

welwillende glimlach gencasseerd.

Ook tijdens dit huiselijk kerstfestijn doen ze mee, alsof ze altijd al tot onze kring hebben behoord. Als we gaan bidden voor het eten, buigen zij ook hun hoofd. Als we de bekende kerstliederen nog eens zingen met begeleiding van gitaren, zingen zij ook mee. Ze zingen zelfs een duet in de Vietnamese taal, een weemoedig lied, dat volgens hen gaat over de zon, die door de duisternis wordt verdronken. Ik moet even denken aan

Vervolg op pag. 19

KREDIET EN U

DE FEITEN ZIJN GRATIS

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Andere belangrijke overwegingen zijn: Huwelijk — hoe tast het uw waarderingsscijfer aan? Uw staat van dienst: kunt u deze herzien en veranderen? De wet — wat zijn uw rechten en verantwoordelijkheden?

Dit zijn slechts enkele onderwerpen die behandeld worden in het gratis boekje: „De Feiten betreffende Krediet en U.” (The Facts about Credit and You). Om dit boekje te krijgen kunt u schrijven naar: „Credit and You,” Consumer Information Centre, 555 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M7A 2H6, of u kunt bellen (416) 963-1111. Door ons te betalen gesprekken worden aangenomen.

NAAM


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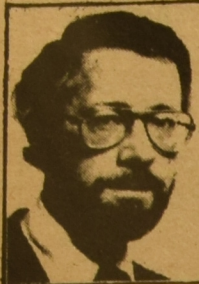
Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations

 **Ontario**

Gord Walker, Minister
William Davis, Premier

Het Gouvernement van Ontario - Werkt om mensen te helpen

Dutch



Dag oude dag!

Ab Vander Mey

Kerstfeest



★ Er zijn mensen die vreselijk tekeer gaan tegen de verzakelijking van Kerstmis. Zij denken dat zelfs het zenden van kerstkaarten aan familieleden in Holland en aan vrienden overbodig is.

Een kniesoor die daar bezwaar tegen heeft, want zo'n kerstkaart is soms het enige contact dat voor sommigen nog bestaat. De afstanden die ons scheiden zijn vaak erg groot. Anderen kunnen zich door ouderdom niet goed meer verplaatsen. Dan kan een kerstkaart een plaatsvervanger voor onze afwezigheid zijn, een teken van verbondenheid.

Zorg ervoor dat kerstfeest een blijde tijd is.

Wij kunnen geen brug bouwen om elkaar tegen het eind van het jaar allemaal te ontmoeten. Dan zijn er kerstkaarten - handen naar ons uitgestoken, ogen die ons aanzien, een klopje op de schouder, een vraag: „ben je er nog?" Kerstkaarten behoren tot die orde van kleine dingen, zoals een kerststukje of een doos chocolade. Een adres is vlug geschreven, maar vrienden herkennen in ons

handschrift ons hart. Er is meer dat ons aan elkaar bindt, dan de lijm van de postzegel. Zo komt God door een kerstkaart gedrukt of geschreven en helpt ons op de been, doet ons weer in liefde geloven, geeft ons geloof in mensen en God. Het zijn kanalen van liefde.

Wij moeten echter wel oppassen, dat wij kerstfeest niet

met St. Nicholaas gaan verwarren. Dat komt bij nogal heel wat families voor. Vroeger, in Holland, was 5 december een huiselijk gebeuren, waarbij wij allerlei cadeaus aan elkaar gaven. Maar er zijn nu heel wat gezinnen waar men overgestapt is om met Kerst elkaar cadeaus te geven. De gewoonte van andere landen wordt overgenomen.

Het feitelijke van kerstfeest wordt wel niet vergeten, maar zonder die cadeaus is het toch maar een kaal gedoe. Het lijkt wel of we niets ontvangen op deze dag, terwijl juist kerstfeest van een ontzaggelijke rijke gave spreekt.

De herders mochten het grote geschenk gaan opzoeken in Bethlehem. Maar zij vonden het niet zo maar even toevallig. Zij moeten het kind gaan zoeken en hun harten moesten daar natuurlijk wel voor opengesteld worden.

Het is zo wonderlijk, God komt tot ons; Hij heeft ons Zijn Zoon gegeven. Engelen van de hemel zongen ervan.

Hoe is het met ons in de kerstdagen? Zoveel geschenken, zoveel versieringen, zoveel feestjes, dat het geschenk dat God ons heeft gegeven niet meer aan bod komt. Wat zou het Kerstfeest zijn zonder het kind? Toch wel erg opper-

vlakkig.

Wij moeten het kind Jezus zoeken, die met zijn Vader het grote feest voorbereidt. Zo kan het pas echt feest worden met God's kerstgeschenk.

Als U dit leest, is het kaarslichttijd, en lange donkere winteravonden. Maar onze harten worden getrokken naar het licht van Christus dat ons omringt.

Kerstfeest is een tijd van grote vreugde. Jezus, onze Zaligmaker is voor ons op deze donkere aarde gekomen.

Ik wil u hierbij mijn warmste kerstgroeten brengen en God's zegen in de komende jaren toewensen.

Kerstfeestelijkheden

Vervolg van pag. 18
de preek van vanmorgen.

Als de kleinkinderen hen uitdagen voor een tafeltenniswedstrijd, blijkt Paul een groot tennisspeler te zijn die de hele familie glansrijk verslaat tot grote vreugde van zijn echtgenote.

Het is al tegen de avond, als we gaan aanzitten voor het uitgebreide Kerstdiner. Al wat Hollands, Canadees en Vietnamees is, tast toe en de gebraden kalkoen wordt in drie talen toegesproken en geprezen.

Het is een heerlijke maaltijd, en aan het eind mag ik voorgaan in dankgebed. Dat is niet moeilijk, want ondanks alle narigheid, waar we elke dag mee worden geconfronteerd, hebben we het rijk en goed gehad vandaag. We vergeten niet de velen te gedenken, die honger hebben, en we beseffen dat bidden alleen niet genoeg is.

We voelen ons niet schuldig vanwege al het goede dat we deze dag genoten hebben, want Kerstfeest moet feest blijven, zelfs in donkerste omstandigheden. Het Licht is niet meer te doven! De Vrede is niet meer te verjagen! Vrolijk Kerstfeest! Merry Christmas! Melly Klistmas!

SAMEN GROEIEN



**Canadezen. Ze komen van diverse achtergronden
en van verschillende delen van Canada. Ze wonen en groeien samen als
trotse inwoners van ons prachtige land.**

Tien jaar geleden erkende de regering officieel de culturele verschillen van dit grootse land van ons toen zij het beleid van het Multiculturalisme formuleerde. Dit was een nieuwe verplichting aan de groeiende ontwikkeling en vergroting van de geest van begrip tussen de vele erfgoederen die onze natie gevormd hebben.

Canada

GROWING TOGETHER

ANNIVERSARY



ANNIVERSAIRE

S'ÉPANOUIR ENSEMBLE

Onze verplichting aan Multiculturalisme is in dit tiende jaar sterker dan het ooit geweest is. En morgen zal het zelfs nog levendiger zijn.

Sluit u daarom bij ons aan in de viering van het verleden, het heden en de toekomst - een toekomst die ons een beter begrip van onszelf en van ons land zal blijven brengen - samen groeien.



Minister of State
Multiculturalism

Ministre d'État
Multiculturalisme

EERDMANS FALL PREVIEW

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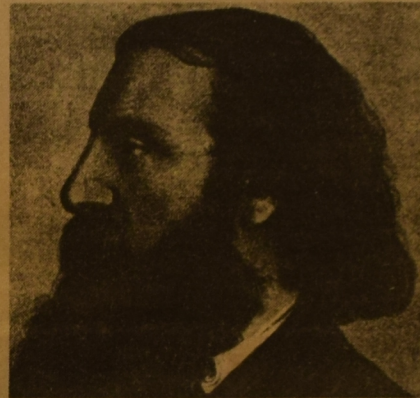
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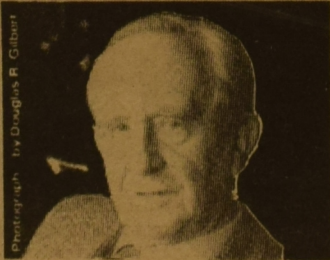
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THANKS

BUNINGA: We thank our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends, for the many best wishes, gifts, flowers and cards we received during our 40th Wedding Anniversary.

Thanks to our Lord; may he bless you all.

Henk and Jane Buninga, Bobcaygeon, ON

KAMERMAN: Adrian and Janna, would like to thank all of you who shared in making our 50th Wedding Anniversary such an unforgettable day. Thanks for all the cards, flowers, gifts and congratulations. We especially give thanks to God for his rich blessings in these 50 years as a family.

LIP: Our hearty thanks to our children and grandchildren, relatives and friends, for all the cards, phone calls, flowers and best wishes on our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Above all, we thank our Lord for all his many blessings in these 50 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Lip, c/o Shalom Manor, 112 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

WYNIA: Thank you to all our children and grandchildren who organized for us a special day on November 18, 1981, the date when we were 45 years married. Surely the Lord has always been our refuge and strength and his everlasting arms were always under and around us. That text has been our wedding text since 1936. Thanks also to our friends for gifts and cards from across Canada and to all of you the best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Mr. and Mrs. G.J. Wynia, 4 Church St., Bloomfield, ON K0K 1G0

BIRTHS

BOVEN: "Bless the Lord O my Soul."

With gladness in our hearts and with thanksgiving to our God, we like to announce the birth of our third son, **DANIEL PAUL**, born November 10, 1981. A precious brother for Matthew and Philip. Proud parents are Fred and Ruth Boven (nee Breukelaar). Daniel is the fourth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. F.H. Boven in Rexdale and the tenth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. J. Breukelaar in Brampton.

70 Clearbrook Circle, Rexdale, ON M9W 2E5

GEERTS: Herman and Margaret (nee Vanderlaan) and children, George, Linda and Jennifer, rejoice in the Lord with the birth of a son and brother, **BRIAN HENRY**, 8 lbs. 14 oz. on November 7, 1981. R.R.#3, Dundas, ON

VANDERHEIDE: With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, we, Ken and Betty (nee Tiersma), are proud to announce the birth of our first child, a son, **JUSTIN ALLEN**, born November 12, 1981, weighing 8 lbs. 11 oz. Happy grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Aldon VanderHeide and Mr. and Mrs. Jetse Tiersma. R.R.#9, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W8

MARRIAGES

HOUWELING-VOTH: Mrs. A. W. Houweling would like to announce the marriage of her daughter, **EILEEN** to **JAKE**, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Voth of Coaldale. The ceremony took place on Friday, November 27, 1981, in the First Chr. Ref. Church of Lethbridge, AB. Rev. J. Tuininga officiated. New address: Box #1270, Coaldale, AB

RYSWYK-ELLENS: Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Ryswyk of Edgerton, MN, and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Ellens Sr. of Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children, **LISA BETH** to **PETER**. The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, December 18, 1981, at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Chr. Ref. Church of Edgerton, MN. Future address: R.R.#6, Railroad, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

VISSER-SIMPSON: Mr. and Mrs. T.R. Visser are pleased to announce the marriage of their son, **RICHARD THEODORE** to **SHEILA HELEN**, daughter of Mrs. G. Simpson. The ceremony took place, on Saturday, November 28, 1981 at the Holland Marsh Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. S. VanderMeer officiated. New address: R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9

WINDHORST-LESAGE: The children of, Mrs. **ALICE WINDHORST** and Mr. **JAKE C. LESAGE**, announce the forthcoming wedding of their parents on, D.V., December 11, 1981, in the Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, 99 Scott St., St. Catharines, ON. Rev. R. Sikkema officiating. Reception following in the fellowship hall where refreshments will be served. Future address: 74 Lakehurst Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2N 4C4

ANNIVERSARIES

1956 December 8

BERT and LIEN BREEDVELD
(nee Verwoerd)

With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, we are happy to celebrate, D.V., with our parents, their 25th Wedding Anniversary. We give thanks for 25 years of Christ-centredness, and we pray for many more years of God's guidance in their lives.

Tim & Annette (girlfriend)
Marilyn & Martin Heinen
Raymond & Kim (fiancee)
Michael
Home address: 8373 16th Ave., Burnaby, BC V3N 1S2

1956 December 18

"If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). With great joy and thankfulness to God, we would like to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

BERT and RIKA GREIDANUS
(nee Valkenburg)

We pray that the Lord will continue to keep them in his care in the years to come.

With love and congratulations from your family:
Teresa — Winnipeg, MB
Wilma — Kitchener, ON
Nancy — Winnipeg, MB
Carolyn — at home
Benny — at home
Open house will be held on Friday, December 18, 1981, from 7:30 - 12:00 p.m. at the White Carnation, Holmersville, ON
Home address: Box #285, Lonsdale, ON N0M 2H0

ANNIVERSARIES

1941 November 25
"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1). With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we wish to announce the 40th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

ANDRE and ADRIANA GROOTENDORST
(nee Koelewijn)

May God richly bless them with many more years together in joy and happiness.

With love and congratulations from their children and grandchildren: Peter & Nella Yzerman; Lisa, Peter, Debra, Timothy
Kase Grootendorst & Nellie (girlfriend)
Henry & Hessina Bekkering; David, Michelle, Mark, James
Rich & Yvonne Grootendorst; Michael
Art & Margaret Verkaik; Steven, Pamela
Home address: 6360 #7 Road, Richmond, BC V6W 1E9

Garyp Georgetown
1946 1981

December 12

It is with joy and thankfulness to the Lord that we hope to celebrate with our parents and grandparents,

HARRY and WIETSKA SMEDES
(nee Westra)

their 35th Wedding Anniversary (and Mom's 59th birthday). We thank God for Christian parents who through 35 years strived to reflect God's love. It is our prayer that God will give them many more years together to share their love with each other and us, their children and grandchildren. Thank you for everything, Mom and Dad, lots of love from: Bill & Nellie; Joanne, Melanie — Mississauga, ON
Ted & Alice; Tony, Trevor — Calgary, AB
Jim — Edmonton, AB
Home address: 43 Ontario St., Georgetown, ON L7G 3K8

1936 1981
"Zandt Gr. Fergus, ON
On November 12, 1981, we remembered with thanksgiving the 45th Wedding Anniversary of our parents,

Mr. and Mrs.
HENRY VANDERLAAN

Children and Grandchildren:
Don & Siny Vanderlaan; Yolanda, Hetty, Denise, Henry, Duane, Scott
Andrew & Rose Vanderlaan; Ron, Cindy, Michelle, Peter, Cathy, David
Abe & Hetty Vanderlaan; Margaret, Pierre, Rene, Hans, Jamie, Philip
Margaret & Herman Geerts; George, Linda, Jennifer, Brian
Ida & Gerard Sloot; Karen, Sidney, Douglas, Heather
Peter & Angie Vanderlaan
R.R.#4, Fergus, ON

Vancouver, BC Sidney, BC
1956 1981

December 1

"The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want; He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside still waters" (Psalm 23:1-2).

With thankfulness and praise to our Lord, we celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

HANK and GERTIE VISSERS
(nee DeVries)

Herb Vissers
Jim & Elly Vissers; Michael
Ron Vissers
Janice Vissers
— all of Sidney, BC
Mom and Dad we thank God for the many years he gave us together and the love we could share. We pray that the Lord will richly bless you in the years to come.

OBITUARIES

"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever" (Psalm 125:2). After a time of suffering, borne with the courage and endurance of faith, my dearly beloved wife, our dear daughter, sister, sister-in-law, and aunt,

ERIE GEERTJE VANDERSLUIJS-CUPIDO

born September 24, 1939, was taken away to be with her Lord.

F. Cupido — Bennekom, The Netherlands

F. Scheffer-VanderSluijs — Edmonton, AB

T. & W. DeHoog (VanderSluijs); Menno, Joan, John — Edmonton, AB

E. & H. Daniels (VanderSluijs); Marcus — Montreal, PQ

C. & A. Tuininga (VanderSluijs); Jillian, Cindy, Melissa, Joel, Laura — Neerlandia, AB

A funeral service for Erie was held on Monday, November 23, 1981, in the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Edmonton, AB. The Rev. Ch. Fennema officiating. Correspondence address: 10611-38 St., Edmonton, AB, Canada T5W 2E1

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Psalm 100:5).

After a time of suffering, borne with the courage and endurance of faith, our dear daughter-in-law, sister-in-law and aunt,

ERIE CUPIDO
(nee VanderSluijs)

beloved wife of our son, brother, brother-in-law and Uncle Fred Cupido, Anemoon #5 Bennekom, The Netherlands, was taken away at age 42 to be with our heavenly Father.

May our heavenly Father sustain and greatly comfort our son, brother, brother-in-law and Uncle Fred.

Neeltje Cupido Sr., — Edmonton, AB

Peter & Ann Cupido — Calgary, AB

Andy & Trix Cupido — Edmonton, AB

Jim & Bernice Cupido — Stony Plain, AB

Mike & Grace Kamsteeg — Victoria, BC

Neil & Ria Cupido — Edmonton, AB

Martin & Barb Cupido — Brooks, AB

Matt & Willy Cupido — Toronto, AB

John & Margareth Cupido — Victoria, BC

Nephews and nieces
Psalm 121

Correspondence address: 10611-38 St., Edmonton, AB, Canada T5W 2E1

Psalm 103:1-5

On Monday, November 23, 1981, the Lord took unto himself, his child,

THOMAS ELGERSMA

in his 71st year.

Beloved husband of:

Wilma Elgersma (nee Sybrandy)

Dear father and Pake of:

Peter & Jane Elgersma; Bev, Tom, Peter — Petawawa

Hessa & Andy Dykstra; Valerie, Rob — St. Catharines

Wilma & Mike Johnson; Mark, Kevin, Jesse — Port Perry

Tena & Alex Krikke; Douglas, Mike, Sandra, Diana, Joel, Ralph — Devlin

Norma Elgersma — Niagara-on-the-Lake

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, November 25, 1981, at the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines. Rev. J. Kuntz officiated. Interment — Niagara Lake Shore Cemetery. Home address: 698 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2M 3R9

OBITUARIES

DE HAAN, CORNELIS ("Case")
age 58; November 12, 1981; Pella Iowa.

Wife: Nelly (nee Verburg);

Children:

Sander & Georgia

Peter W. & June

Case W. & Paula

Guy & Maryan,

Bill & Tina C. De Boel

Ralph J. & LuAnn

Fred L.

Reid & Corinne L. Smeda

15 grandchildren

"Geloofd zij God met diepst ontzag..." (Psalm 68:10).

The Lord, in his infinite wisdom, called home to himself our dearly loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

LENA BERTHA MANTEL
(nee Eifler)

in her 76th year, on November 23, 1981.

Predeceased by her husband, Harold Mantel, in 1974.

It is our comfort to know that her struggle of this earthly life has ended and that she now lives forever with her Lord and Saviour.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psalm 23:1, 4).

Dear mother of:

Peter & Shirley Mantel — Dundas

Sophy & Fred Elgersman — Caledonia

George & Sadie Mantel — Dundas

Bill & Mary Mantel — Waterdown

Nellie & Louie Andree — Brinston

Karl & Anne Mantel — Waterdown

Lena & Ted Sluis — Greensville

John & Wilma Mantel — Brinston

and 46 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

On November 13, 1981, suddenly the Lord took home our dear wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

CORNELIA ANTONIA VAN OOSTVEEN
(nee Driessen)

age the age of 78.

Beloved wife for 52 years of Roelof van Oostveen.

Mother of:

Kees & Corrie van Oostveen — Listowel

Jan & Judy van Oostveen — Burlington

Ida & Kees De Gier — Tavistock

Roel & Annie van Oostveen — Harriston

Krijn & Willy van Oostveen — Lakeside

Annie & Annie Geene — Delaware

Corrie & Alle De Vries — Ayr

Wijnand & Sue Ann van Oostveen — Ayr

Willie & Henk Ruiter — Burlington

36 grandchildren & 4 great-grandchildren

R.R.#1, Ayr, ON

We mourn in sympathy with Paul and Teresa Renkema, and their children; Cynthia, Gerald and Terence, and the bereaved family, on the death of their father and grandfather,

DOUWE Vlieg

who died on August 28, 1981, at the age of 79, in Listowel, ON.

May the God of grace give them his comfort.

"As a heart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God" (Psalm 42:1).

Congregation and Council, Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church

Op 16 nov. nam de Here tot Zich ons medelid,

Mr. K. WIEBENGA

in volle verzekerdheid van Zijn geloof. Onze bede is dat de Here Zijn vrouw en kinderen tot troost en sterkte mag zijn.

The Golden Age Club, Chatham, ON

Classified Advertising

OBITUARIES

We rejoiced with our mother and father who celebrated their 35th Wedding Anniversary on November 5, 1981, and 4 days later, on Monday, November 9, 1981, the Lord took home our beloved husband, father and grandfather,

GYSBERT OUWENDYK
at the age of 59.

"Not anything in this creation will separate us from the love and the will of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:28-39).

Dad left behind his loving wife: Akke Ouwendyk (nee Dreyer) and children:

John & Hennie De Vries — Yukon

Jack & Fay Ouwendyk — Simcoe
Pete & Gretha Hogeterp — Wel-land

Charlotte Ouwendyk — Edmonton
Rick & Francine Ouwendyk — Simcoe

Shirley Ouwendyk — Grand Rapids
Robert Ouwendyk — at home and 9 grandchildren

The funeral was held on November 12, 1981, at the Chr. Ref. Church of Simcoe, ON. Rev. L. Slofstra officiated.

Home address: R.R.#4, Simcoe, ON

"If we live, it is for the Lord; that we live, and if we die, it is for the Lord that we die. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord" (Romans 14:8).

On Monday, November 16, 1981, the Lord took to himself our beloved, husband, father and Opa,

KEES WIEBENGA

at the age of 71, quietly and peacefully, after a long illness, but in full assurance that our Lord is faithful to all his promises.

We, his wife and his children, thank our heavenly Father, for the life he could have and the glory he is experiencing now.

Beloved husband of: Tena Wiebenga (nee Tillemma)

Dear father of:

John & Grace Wiebenga — Chatham, ON

Sylvia & Paul DeHaan — Guelph, ON

Tini & Martin Vanderzwan — Chatham, ON

Cliff & June Wiebenga — Corrunna, ON

9 grandchildren and 1 grandchild predeceased.

Funeral services were held on November 19, 1981, in the First Chr. Ref. Church, Chatham, ON. Rev. Lambertus Mulder, of Whitby, ON officiated.

South Chatham Village, 40 Elm St., Apt. #311, Chatham, ON

On November 16, 1981, our dear brother-in-law,

CORNELIS (Kees) WIEBENGA passed into glory, at the age of 71. May the Lord strengthen our sister, Tena Wiebenga (nee Tillemma), and her children.

"Hij is verlost, God heeft hem welgedaan."

H. Tillemma (nee Hoogstra)

G. & G. Brouwer (nee Tillemma)

L. & T. Faas (nee Tillemma)

A. & G. Tillemma (nee Hansma)

— Calgary, AB

nieces and nephews

Chatham, ON

PERSONAL

Sincere, Christian widow, living Ontario, desires to correspond with a Christian gentleman, aged 65 to 70. Correspondence can be in Dutch or English. Please write to Box #4656, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

Sincere, Christian woman, middle 40's would like very much to meet sincere Christian gentleman, who needs and wants a great amount of love. Send full details with photo to: Box #4655, Calvinist Contact, 99 Niagara St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4L3

BRAMPTON: The John Knox Christian School invites applications for a temporary teaching position for **grade 3**, commencing January 4, 1982. Position could possibly become permanent. Please forward complete resume and application to: Mr. I. Witteveen, Principal, John Knox Chr. School, 82 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7, phone: 416-451-3236.

HELP WANTED

Journey man auto body mechanic is needed for immediate employment in a clean, modern, well-equipped shop. A great opportunity for someone who is looking for a change and takes pride in doing quality work. Our area offers beautiful mountain scenery, excellent hunting and fishing as well as a friendly Chr. Ref. Church and elementary Chr. education. Call: Norm Mantel collect at: (604) 635-3929, Norm's Auto Refinishing Ltd., R.R.#3, Terrace, BC V8G 4R6

HELP WANTED

Administrative assistant

with good organizational skills

at

Salem Christian Mental Health Association

Position to begin January 1, 1982

Please submit resume by:

December 15, 1981.

To:

Laura V. Visser

26 Burnett Ave.

Willowdale, ON M2N 1V1

The Christian Farmers Federation of Western Canada

requires a

PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

to communicate Federation policies to government, media and the public; and to promote the Federation's existence, purpose and activities.

Candidates must demonstrate a commitment to the Christian faith.

Preference will be given to candidates with a University degree, background or experience in agriculture, and effective communication skills. Administrative abilities are an asset.

Salary negotiable, Edmonton location.

Please send inquiries to:

Mr. Lambert Tuininga, President

CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION

Box 56, Neerlandia, Alberta T0G 1R0

Phone (403) 674-4198

Please call after 5:00 P.M.

WORLD MISSIONS

is seeking applications to fill vacancies in

Nigeria

Medical Technologist • Medical Doctors

Secretary

If interested or if you know of someone whom we should contact please correspond with us.

Personnel Secretary

Christian Reformed World Missions

2850 Kalamazoo Ave.

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49560

Tel. (616) 241-6568

The Christian Labour Association of Canada

has a vacancy in British Columbia for a **full-time representative**. Applicants must enjoy working with people. The job involves stimulating activity of CLAC's locals, organizing and representing groups of employees, and negotiating collective agreements. A training period of one year is provided.

Applicants must view labour relations from a Christian perspective. They should possess a large amount of self-motivation, be willing to take on responsibility, and be able to function well in a team. The successful applicant will have to reside within driving distance of CLAC's Coquitlam office. Application letters together with a complete resume as to education and previous work experience should be sent to:

CLAC, #209 - 508 Clarke Rd., Coquitlam, BC V3J 3X2

RETIRED AND OUTGOING PERSON WANTED

The King's College seeks a retired person to fill a position in the Office of Development and Communications.

The successful applicant will be able to meet with people on a one-to-one or small group basis.

A stipend and travelling allowance will be available.

This part-time position should be attractive to a person who wants to promote Christian higher education while doing a certain amount of travelling around western Canada.

Deadline for applications is January 31, 1982

Send letter of application and resume to:

Director of Development and Communications

10766 - 97 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5H 2M1

(403) 428-0727



The King's College

A Christian Liberal Arts College

GREENHOUSE HELP:

Lady for full time, year round greenhouse employment.

Phone: (416) 643-1628

Furniture Foreman Prince George, B.C.

the job: Two furniture production foremen required by furniture manufacturer in Prince George, B.C. Individuals must be familiar with woodworking machinery (double end tenoners, 5 head moulders, belt sanders, etc.) Must be capable of supervising 6 - 9 people. Previous supervisory experience in furniture plants preferred. Excellent wages with full range of fringe benefits.

the city: Prince George is a growing city of 80,000 people in central British Columbia. The city has a Christian Reformed Church of 50 families and a Christian school with grades 1 - 10.

Send resume to:

Scana Industries Ltd.,

988 Great Street, Prince George, B.C. V2N 2K8

(Phone: 563-0408)

FOR RENT

Clearwater/St. Petersburg Beach area, Florida

FOR RENT: In Indian Rocks Beach, a 2 bedroom condominium (approx. 1,300 sq. ft.), corner/ground floor with panoramic view of Boga Ciega Bay. Completely furnished. Across road from Gulf of Mexico. 30 minutes from Busch Gardens, 90 minutes to Disneyworld. An ideal vacation place. **RATE:** US \$240 per week and up, depends on season. For details/reservations write: P.O. Box 216, Station R, Toronto, ON M4G 3Z9 or phone evenings: (416) 445-1359.

Attractive, four bedroom home for rent; located conveniently in Whitby; available mid December. For further information phone: (416) 668-6996 or (416) 725-6881.

3 bedroom, bungalow for rent on a large country lot in Orono; full basement; oil furnace; Franklin fire place; 15 minutes from Chr. Ref. Church and Knox Chr. School, Bowmanville. Available January 1982 until May or June 1982. Call: (416) 983-5490

BUSINESS

DYKSTRA

PHOTOGRAPHY

— servicing the Niagara Peninsula
— weddings
— family portraits

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CLARENCE DYKSTRA

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Burlington

Why not give a friend a C.C. subscription for Christmas. It makes a lovely gift.

Evangelistic material in Arabic

Books, tracts and cassettes (including New Testament recorded in Arabic), available in quantities.

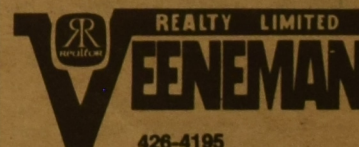
Write:

Arabic Department

The Back to God Hour,

P.O. Box 5070,

Burlington, ON L7R3Y8



426-4195

104 Colborne St., North Simcoe
119 acres dairy farm; rolling land with flowing creek; good milk quota and full line of dairy and farm equipment; 57 head of Holsteins; located on Highway; bus transportation to Chr. elem. and high school; asking price \$275,000; health reason for selling; vendor will take back mortgage.

98 acres general farm; with 6-room house; large barn and implement house; located a few miles from Simcoe; asking \$190,000.

8 acre hobby farm; with modern home; \$65,900

After hours phone: 428-0434

50 ACRES: beautiful garden soil; 3 bedroom, 9-year-old home; set up for sows; presently, crop included; plus machinery; price \$115,000. For more details call:

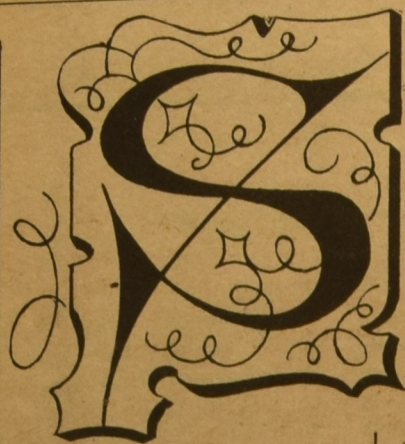
KEITH MILLER & ASSOCIATES REALTY LTD.

220 Broad St., E., Dunnville, ON

(416) 774-7624

and ask for Art Vandervliet

(416) 774-4611 [evgs.]



SEASON'S GREETINGS

ANTONIDES: We wish all our friends and family a blessed Christmas and New Year.
H. and H. Antonides, 404 Geneva St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 2G8

BANDSTRA: Mr. and Mrs. O. Bandstra wensen familie, vrienden, en kennissen een gezegend en gelukkig 1982 toe.
R.R.#2, Newcastle, ON L0A 1H0

BLYLEVEN: Mrs. Maria Blylevel extends to all her family and friends a joyful Christmas and a happy New Year.
3260 New St., Apt. #115, Burlington, ON

DE HAAN: Mr. and Mrs. Henry De Haan wensen al hun familieleden en vrienden een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar.
11 Youngblut Ave., St. Catharines, ON

DE VRIES: We like to wish all our friends and acquaintances, blessed holidays and a joyful 1982 A.D.
Albert & Dora de Vries, Ottawa, ON

DE VRIES: To family and friends we hereby extend our best wishes for the Christmas season and for the coming New Year.
Harry & Erna de Vries, Hamilton, ON

DE VRIES: We wish all our friends and relatives the joys and blessings of Christmas and God's guidance throughout 1982.
Wim & Truus de Vries, 493 West 5th, Hamilton, ON

ELLENS: Gordon and Hillie Ellens and family wish relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and that that blessing may last throughout the New Year.
1466 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON N7S 3X9

ELLENS: Familie, vrienden en bekenden, prettige kerstdagen en Gods onmisbare zegen voor 't jaar 1982 toegewenst
Mrs. T. Ellens van Kalsbeek, 1466 Exmouth St., Sarnia, ON

FLUIT: Wij wensen al onze familie, vrienden en kennissen gezegende Kerstdagen en Gods zegen voor het nieuwe jaar.
Klaas & Henny Fluit, Apt. #101, 3260 New St., Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

GROEN: To my relatives and friends, sincere wishes for a blessed Christmas and a New Year with your hand in God's hand, in trust and faith.
(Mrs.) Fennie Groen, London, ON

HAAN: Mr. and Mrs. W.R. Haan, Whitby, ON, wish all family and friends God's blessing on Christmas and the New Year.

HAGEN: Conrad and Margje Hagen wish all their friends and family a blessed and merry Christmas and God's blessing for the New Year.
607 West 5th St., Hamilton, ON L9G 6L9

HOITING: Siep, Dini, Robert, Richard and Debbie are wishing all our relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and a prosperous 1982.
R.R.#1, Salford, ON

HAMSTRA: Wij wensen al onze familie, vrienden en kennissen een gezegend Kerstfeest en Gods onmisbare zegen voor het jaar 1982.

Mr. and Mrs. P. Hamstra, 169 Caradoc St. S., Strathroy, ON N7G 2N9

JONGKIND: We wish all of our friends and relatives a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

Dirk and Rie Jongkind, Toronto, ON

KNIGHT: Mrs. Gertrude Knight (nee Weeda), wishes all her relatives, friends and members of our congregation, a blessed Christmas and a healthy and happy 1982.

764 Welland Ave., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

KOENE: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and God's nearness in the New Year.

Mr. & Mrs. A.C. Koene, 40 Highland Dr., Chatham, ON

KOOPS: Wij wensen al onze familie, vrienden en bekenden een gezegend Kerstfeest en een voorspoedig Nieuwjaar.
Jan & Maria Koops, 73 Earls-court Cres., Woodstock, ON

KOORNNEEF: Aan al mijn familie en vrienden een gezegend Kerstfeest.
Mrs. Ann Koornneef, Shalom Manor, Rm. 225, 172 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4M5

LIP: Mr. and Mrs. H. Lip Sr., wish all their relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.
112 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

MELENBERG: Gerrit and Anne Melenberg of Edmonton, AB, wish all their family and friends a blessed Christmas and New Year 1982.

10406-144 St., Edmonton, AB

MIEDEMA: Mr. en Mrs. T. Miedema wensen familie, vrienden & bekenden een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar.

90 Lakeport Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2N 4P8

MOLEMA: Aan allen die deze advertentie lezen wensen wij een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar.

Kees & Jantje Molema, 3260 New St., Apt. #107, Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

MTDARTISTS:

Peace from the prince, the CHILD OF BETHLEHEM
James Ward & Hans Altena
MTD ARTISTS 616-241-3787

NUSSELDER: Aan alle vrienden en bekenden een gezegend Kerst en Nieuwjaar toegewenst van Mrs. J.S. Nusselder, 3260 New St., Apt. #218, Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

PRINS: The family Prins from Dunnville, ON, wishes all their cousins, aunts and uncles, especially those out West a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

RHEBERGEN: We wish all our relatives and friends a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
Frances and Gerald Rhebergen and family, Tottenham, ON

SCHUURMAN: To all relatives and friends our best wishes for a blessed Christmas and 1982.

Cor and Reini Schuurman and family, R.R.#2, Branchton, ON

SMIT: Mrs. B. Smith, 147 Drewry Ave., Willowdale, ON wishes all her friends and relatives a blessed Christmas and God's blessing in the year 1982.

STREUTKER: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

John and Tolly Streutker and family, R.R.#8, Woodstock, ON

STRUYK: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

Harry and Jane Struyk and family, #3 South Service Rd. E., Grimsby, ON L3M 1Y5

TIGCHELAAR: We wish all our relatives and friends the Lord's blessing at Christmas and his loving care and guidance for the New Year.

Klaas and Ann Tigchelaar, R.R.#1, Waterdown, ON

VAN DYK: Mr. and Mrs. Cor Van Dyk wensen familie, vrienden en bekenden gezegende Kerstdagen en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar.

2714-10th Ave., N., Lake Worth, Florida

VAN MANEN: Een gezegend Kerstfeest en Nieuwjaar toegewenst aan familie vrienden en bekenden.

Mrs. T. van Manen, (van Kalsbeek), 25 Tofield Cres., Rexdale, On M9W 2B8

VAN MARRUM: To all our relatives and friends, merry Christmas and happy New Year.
Gerlof & Tina Van Marrum, 143 Rock St., Smithville, ON

VAN ROOYEN: We would like to wish all our relatives and friends a merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Mr. and Mrs. Marten Van Rooyen and family, Forest, On

VAN SOELEN: Wishing all our relatives, friends and acquaintances Seasons Greetings. May Christ be in your Christmas and may he bless you in the New Year.

Cor and Ina Van Soelen and family, Wellandport, ON

VAN STAALDUINEN: John and Mary Van Staalduinen wish all their friends, relatives and acquaintances a blessed Christmas and also a prosperous 1982.
66 Canterbury Ave., Stoney Creek, ON L8G 3S6

VEENSTRA: Pieter and Florence Veenstra, 53 Ghent St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 2C8, wensen familie, vrienden & bekenden gezegende Kerstdagen en Gods leiding in 1982.

VELDSTRA: Een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar toegewenst voor mijn kinderen, kleinkinderen, achterklein kinderen, vrienden en bekenden.

S. Veldstra, 806-18 Mohawk Rd. E., Hamilton, ON L9A 2G6

VIS: Mr. en Mrs. P. Viss, Sr., wensen hun familie, vrienden en kennissen een gezegend Kerstfeest en een gelukkig Nieuwjaar toe.

Shalom Manor, Room #234, 112 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4M5

VRIEND: Aan alle familie leden en vrienden een gezegend Kerstfeest en Nieuwjaar toegewenst van Mr. J. Vriend, Elim Villa, Apt. #109, Waterdown, ON L0R 2H0

WESTERVELD: Willy Westerveld wishes her friends, also the friends around Port Perry, a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

368 Eglinton Ave. E., #411, Toronto, ON



Books

The following books appear here in the order they appeared on the October, 1981 bestseller list of the *Bookstore Journal* of the Christian Booksellers Association.

Bestsellers

Hardcover:

1. **Improving Your Serve: The Art of Unselfish Living.** by Charles R. Swindoll; Word Books, G.R. Welch, Burlington, ON, 1981; 219 pp, \$8.95 (U.S.A.). Reviewed by Harry Van Belle, Langley, BC.

Content: This book deals with the biblical notion of being and becoming a servant. In the main it consists of a series of expositions of Bible passages, loosely interspersed with suitable anecdotes, all designed to make the point that our serve can be improved.

Style: It is easy to read but presents no new insights. As another "how to" book, it is a superficial and moralistic treatment of a serious topic. In essence we are asked to follow people (biblical or otherwise) whose lives are examples of successful serving.

Assessment: I am glad that there are no heroes in the Bible. And rather than

imitating others, I prefer to live by grace. No, the book did not serve me well to become a more willing servant.

2. **A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23,** by Phillip Keller; Zondervan/R.G. Mitchell Family Books, Willowdale, ON; 47th printing, Oct., 1979; 142 pp. Reviewed in the 1980 Fall Book Issue.

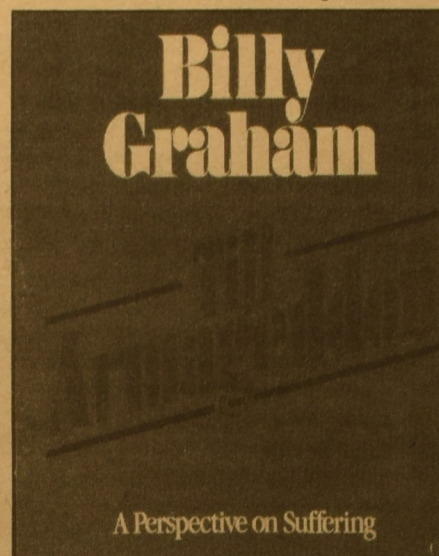
3. **The Christian Mother Goose Book** by Marjorie A. Decker; Fleming Revell, 1980/G.R. Welch. Reviewed in the 1980 Fall Book Issue.

4. **The Strong Willed Child** by Dr. James Dobson; Tyndale House, 1978/R.G. Mitchell Family Books. Reviewed in the 1980 Fall Book Issue.

5. **Till Armageddon. A Perspective on Suffering** by Billy Graham; Word Books,

G.R. Welch, 1981; cloth, 224 pp, \$8.95. Reviewed by Rev. Johan D. Tangelder.

Content: This is not a theological treatise



on prophecy. Billy Graham admitted in a *Christianity Today* interview that the title was slightly misleading. The purpose of the book is to prepare the Christian for the great Amageddon that will come some day and for the little personal "Armageddons" we all face now such as illness, family problems or economic reversals.

What is suffering? Why does a loving God allow it? Why aren't God's people exempt from suffering? How do we react to pain? Difficult questions are raised for which no simple answers can be found. Though there are no easy answers, God can bring great blessing to us through suffering and difficulties. Pain is not in vain. We are called upon to trust the Lord, seek him in prayer and rely on his Word. Our Saviour will lead us through whatever may befall us.

Style: I read this book when I was in the hospital recovering from surgery. I found it greatly encouraging. Sufferers will find this sensitive and compassionate writing a blessing and a comfort.

Assessment: Billy Graham has been accused of preaching a pie-in-the-sky religion. But this is not the case in this book. Social awareness is shown. He also calls for a Christian lifestyle. "I believe that life, in the biblical sense," says Graham, "means that the Christian does not practice things like lying, dishonesty, greed, jealousy, pride, prejudice. He does not condone social injustice. He is dominated by love, joy, and peace in his inward life. He has a genuine love for his neighbour. He takes unpopular stands on moral and social issues. He has a God-given grace to forgive those who do him wrong. He may be firm in his theological, moral and ethical concepts, but he is tolerant of those who sincerely hold other views. I believe that that is the basic life style the scriptures are talking about."

I appreciate this latest book by the world's leading evangelist. However, I part ways when it comes to his interpretation of prophecy. He holds to the typical premillennial view of the things to come.

6. **Children Are Wet Cement** by Anne Ortlund; Fleming H. Revell, 1981/G.R. Welch; hc, 188 pp, \$8.95. Reviewed by Frank Groenewold, Maple Ridge, BC

Content and Style: This book deals with the topic of child-rearing methods. However it is not written within a psychological framework, but rather it is a personal account of the author's childhood and how she and her husband raised their children. The author describes her methods from a Christian perspective to the point of being inspirational rather than educational. She believes that we as parents must make the right impressions in the lives of our children since their formative years are like "wet cement." The main methods that she describes are verbal affirmations and encouragement. She explains how important these are in the development of a child's self-concept. She also deals briefly with the topic of discipline and how this should be applied.

Assessment: In my opinion, the book is written from too personal a viewpoint and this lack of objectivity detracts from the possible educational aspect of the book. I feel that the title is misused—cement has a definite irreversible quality. A more appropriate metaphor might have been that the formative years of a child's life are like clay which must be molded but can be reshaped. I also feel that the book lacks a realistic approach and is too idealistic in regard to the topic of child-rearing. I do not envision this book as an effective educational tool in the area of child-rearing.

7. **A Celebration of Discipline: The Path of Spiritual Growth** by Richard Foster; Harper and Row, 1978/Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Toronto, ON. Reviewed in the 1980 Fall Book Issue.

8. **Meeting God at Every Turn** by Catherine Marshall; VA: Chosen Books/Rainbow House, Stouffville, ON; 1980, hc, 254 pp, \$9.95. Reviewed by May Drost, London, ON.

Content: Catherine Marshall wrote *Meeting God at Every Turn* partially in response to her daughter Linda's request for some perspective on marriage and on the Christian life in general. By sifting through diaries, journals and letters, she tells us in a Foreword, she decided to write down her own "spiritual journey" as she saw it in retrospect.

The book is divided into twelve chapters, each dealing with a particular "turn in the road" of her life. She testifies time and again that whether a turn was marked by joy or grief or fear, God was there to bless, comfort, and correct.

Some of the material in this book has been published before, but there is information and insight based on journals that has not appeared in print before. This information is decidedly frank, and Miss Marshall does not spare either herself or members of her family in her attempt to describe honestly how God has dealt with her.



Style: Marshall is an entertaining storyteller, and in this autobiographical book this ability is also apparent. Readers are not subjected to the tiresome religious verbiage that is too often characteristic of this sort of book. Instead, Marshall relates specific personal or family situations and then, from a retrospective point of view, tries to show how the Lord, directly or indirectly, intervened. She often quotes directly from her journals and then comments.

Assessment: There are advantages to surveying one's life in retrospect. In the turmoil of daily living, things are sometimes terribly out of focus, and it isn't until well after a crisis is over that we can consider whether or not we did the right thing, or assessed the situation correctly. Marshall presents some insights that come from the wisdom of hindsight.

There are also disadvantages to surveying life in retrospect. When Christians talk about "God's plan for our lives," they sometimes see what is not there, because they have superimposed an artificial pattern on their lives, this pattern being

Continued on page 26

Children's Literature

A delightful children's world

Pink Lemonade, Poems by Annie Schmidt, translated from Dutch by Henrietta ten Harmsel, illustrated by Linda Cares; published by Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI; 1981, Oxford University Press, Don Mills, ON; \$8.95 USA. Reviewed by Dr. Remkes Kooistra, Campus Chaplain, Waterloo, ON

This book came to me as a welcome surprise in the midst of a study of all kinds of learned books about cults and the occult. It reminded me of a visit with Henrietta ten Harmsel, professor of English at Calvin College, when we discussed the baroque and metaphysical poetry of the seventh century (don't be scared or confused). Our "common denominator" was Jacobus Revius, a Dutch poet; many of whose poems ten Harmsel has translated in English and about whom I was preparing a special lecture for a meeting of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Netherlandic Studies.

To meet Henrietta ten Harmsel was an event by itself. She was totally an enthusiastic teacher, willing to help in whatever way possible. How it happened I don't remember, but at a certain moment ten Harmsel began telling me about the poems for children written by Annie Schmidt. The discovery of Schmidt presented her with a new frontier. With an almost grandmotherly dedication and pleasure she wanted also the children of the North-American continent to be able to enjoy these delightful poems. So after she had translated a number of them, she sent some samples to Annie Schmidt, who liked the adapted translations very much. The result of all this is *Pink Lemonade*. It contains selections from ten of the twelve volumes of children's poetry that Annie Schmidt has produced so far. In the Netherlands Annie Schmidt has become a household word. People of all ages read, memorize and sing the poems of this prolific and versatile prize-winning author. Her poems have been trans-

lated into German, French, Japanese, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and now, finally and for the first time, into English.

When I talked with ten Harmsel the book was still in preparation, "under construction" you might say. She read me two poems, both in the Dutch and in her precise and melodious translation.

The first one describes the love between Miss Poker and Mr. Tong, who are hanging together next to the fire. Mr. Tong tells Miss Poker: "You are the one I love and admire," and the answer does not disappoint her companion:

...my dear Mr. Tong I'll marry you right away,
For I'm made of iron and you are too
I'll go through smoke and fire with you!

The result is, "They got married and lived happily ever after." It reads:

So the Poker and Tong got married last week
Now they're hanging together, cheek to cheek,
They cuddle each other in all kinds of weather,
And whenever they glow, they glow together.

The second one was the poem that gave the book its title *Pink Lemonade*. It describes "a beautiful garden in far away France," with in the middle a pond full of pink lemonade. Her children find a wonderful freedom:

The children go rowing around in a boat —
It's never against the law —
And when they're not singing, they take a cool sip
Through a very long elegant straw.

"Suppose a child falls in that pond?" I hear children sing. Annie Schmidt has an answer ready:

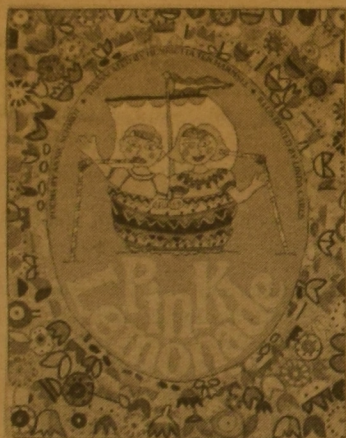
They rescue him as quick as a wink,
And then they start licking, so that he won't stay
So terribly sticky and pink!

Pink Lemonade offers some 42 poems for children of ages 4-10 and for the young of heart of any age.

It may be true, as the publisher tells me, that the poems are not "Christian" poems, but they certainly say "yes" to the creation. They echo that what God had made was very good. Sometimes there is some satire with our civilized ideals as in the story of the pig who wanted a career, or some wild mockery with our tendency to glorify the unknown as in "Nothing at All"; yet the book never becomes saturated with cheap and easy moralisms.

The book comes with humorous, child-oriented illustrations by Linda Cares on every page.

When you buy the book, you will get it in an all pink jacket, complete with a package of *Pink Lemonade*. I think it makes a marvelous Christmas or birthday gift.



Events

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

Ontario

- Nov. 27** Curriculum Development Centre Annual Meeting. Dr. Gordon Spykman will speak on the topic "Schools and Society". Time 8:00 p.m. Location: Toronto District Christian High School, 7900 Kipling Ave., Woodbridge, ON.
- Nov. 28** Organ Concert by Andre Knevel, Grimsby CRC at 8:00 p.m. Tina Jonker soloist.
- Dec. 9** Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario Annual Convention & Banquet, University of Guelph. Theme: "Stewardship of Our Foodlands". Time: 10 a.m. Banquet 6 p.m.
- Dec. 12** Christmas Organ Concert by Andre Knevel, St. Thomas Anglican Church, St. Catharines, at 8:00 p.m. Tina Jonker soloist.
- Dec. 12** "The Messiah" by G.F. Handel, performed by the Laudate Dominum Choir of Chatham. The Director will be Mr. John Postma, the Organist will be Mr. Bill Quartel of Chatham. The concert will be held in the First Presbyterian Church of Chatham, Ontario. The performance will begin at 8:00 p.m. No admission charge.
- Dec. 20** Brampton Christian Choral Society "Praise the Lord" will hold its annual Christmas concert at 8:00 p.m. in the Brampton Second Chr. Ref. Church, corner of McLaughlin and Steeles, Brampton.
- Dec. 19** "The Messiah" by G.F. Handel, performed by the Laudate Dominum Choir of Chatham. The Director will be Mr. John Postma, the organist will be Mr. Bill Quartel of Chatham. The concert will be held in the Second Christian Reformed Church, 265 Albion Road, Rexdale, Ontario. The performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$2.00 for adults and \$1.50 for students.
- Dec. 19** 20th annual Christmas Concert of the Choirs and Orchestra of the "Ontario Christian Music Assembly" under the direction of Mr. Leendert Kooy in the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church on Scugog St. in Bowmanville at 8 o'clock. Organist Mr. Andre Knevel.
- Dec. 23** 20th annual Christmas Concert of the Choirs and Orchestra of the "Ontario Christian Music Assembly" under the direction of Mr. Leendert Kooy in the Willowdale United Church on Kenneth Ave. (behind the Nortown Shopping Centre) at 8 p.m. Organist Mr. Andre Knevel.
- Dec. 23** Candlelight service in the Mount Hamilton Chr. Ref. Church (corner of Upper Wellington and Stone Church) at 8:00 p.m.
- Dec. 28-30** Annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in North America, at Ontario Bible College and Theological Seminary, Toronto. Theme for the conference is "Relationships Between the Testaments."
- Feb. 26-27** Annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society of Canada, Canadian Theological College, Regina. After the highly successful meeting last spring in Toronto on the theme "Church Renewal in Canada Today."

AACS Hostess Suppers

- Nov. 28:** Brampton: contact Mrs. Hermina Dykxhoorn (791-0906)
Nov. 27: Owen Sound: contact Mr. John Vanderploeg (376-8344)
Nov. 27: Georgetown: contact Mr. S. Adema Sr. (877-3352)
Nov. 27: Barrie: contact Mrs. Barb Duiker (726-0745)
Bowmanville/Oshawa: contact Mr. John Hull (623-1335)
Belleville: contact Mr. Bert Hielema (478-6837)

BACK TO GOD HOUR RALLIES

Dec. 11, 12, 13: Chatham/Sarnia, with Rev. J. Vreeman.

NEXT ISSUE

Dated	Mailed	Deadline for classified ads	Deadline for other advertising
Fri. Dec. 11	Wed. Dec. 9	Fri. Dec. 4-10 a.m.	Wed. Dec. 2-noon
Fri. Dec. 18	Wed. Dec. 16	Fri. Dec. 11-10 a.m.	Wed. Dec. 9-noon
Fri. Dec. 25	Wed. Dec. 23	Fri. Dec. 18-10 a.m.	Wed. Dec. 16-noon
Fri. Jan. 1 ★ NO ISSUE ★			
Fri. Jan. 8	Wed. Jan. 6	Thurs. Dec. 24-10 a.m.	Wed. Dec. 23-noon

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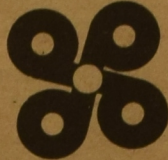
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Wednesday, December 9, 1981, D.V.
— 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Banquet 6:00 p.m. —

LOCATION:

Peter Clark Hall, University Centre
University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario

CONVENTION SPEAKERS:

Dr. Arthur Simon, Executive Director, Bread for the World on "Foodlands and Hunger"

Dr. C.S. Baldwin, faculty, Ridgetown College of Agriculture Technology on "Our Countryside — It's Everybody's Concern"

BANQUET SPEAKER:

The Honourable Eugene Whelan, Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa, on "Stewardship of our Foodlands"

MUSIC & SONG:

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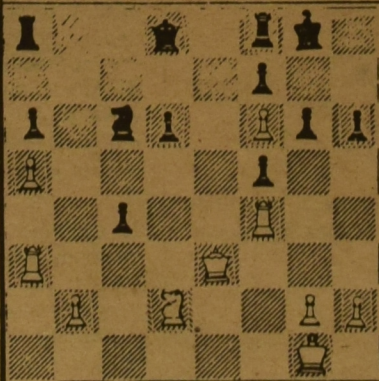
DEADLINE: Monday at noon, December 7.

LET'S PLAY CHESS

Editor: Pete Layer

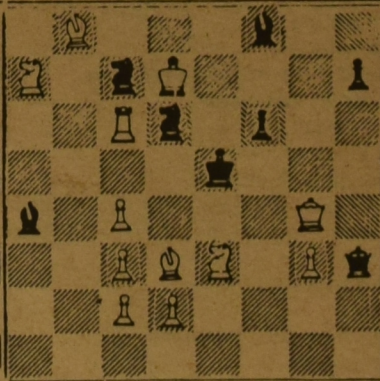
FIRST SERIES OF PROBLEMS IN DECEMBER

#896
GAME POSITION
12



10
White to play and win
3 pts.

#897
C.W. Sheppard
8



12
2 mover 2 pts.

NOTES

1. The December game position, #896, shows Black with two more pawns than White. In this volatile situation, Pawns will not make or break the game. I found one variation where Black gives up a Knight to prevent checkmate. Such a loss is still too great to save the game. Please give the full solution.

2. The two-mover, #897, is identical to #881 of the summer series. Don't move pieces while they are pinned! Please give the key and threat, if any.

3. The deadline will be given with next week's problems.

Bestsellers

Continued from page 25

based on their theories of how God intervenes in human affairs. In other words, hindsight does not necessarily mean clarity of vision. In the context of God's providence, we live freely and responsibly, and God does not manipulate us onto the right road. Many of us shall have to wait until we see the Lord face to face to understand fully the meaning of our lives. Marshall has mapped the road of her life in rather more detail than I find comfortable.

Throughout her life, Marshall has depended on the scriptures for guidance and comfort. She distinguishes between the *logos*, God's written word in scripture, and the *rhema*, "that part of the *logos* to which the Holy Spirit points us personally, which he illuminates and brings to life for us in our particular situation." She depends heavily, therefore, on specific directions from the Lord.

I confess that I sometimes envy persons who say with assurance that the Lord has told them to "move to Chicago," and at the same time, I am skeptical. From my vantage point, I think that the Lord does not so much speak to us on a situation by situation (ad hoc) basis, but in a much broader, all-encompassing way. For guidance in any sort of situation, we need the wisdom of all the Law and the Prophets, not individual verses out of context.

Finally, and with all respect for what Marshall has tried to do in his book, I would say that continuous introspection can easily result in a sort of spiritual self-centredness that blinds one to the broader contours of the Lord's providence.

Marshall fans will enjoy this book. Others, perhaps particularly those of "Reformed" persuasion, might find it interesting to meet a Christian outside of their own religious and cultural context.

9. Emotions — Can You Trust Them? by James Dobson; Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1980/R.G. Mitchell Family Books, hc, 143 pp, \$8.25. Reviewed by Mary VanderVennen, Christian Counselling Services, Toronto, ON.

Content: Dr. Dobson talks about the place of emotions in people's lives and then considers three common ones: guilt, romantic love, and anger. The last section is on "interpretation of impressions," or how do we know or interpret God's will for our lives.

Style: Dr. Dobson writes in a breezy, readable style. Language is non-technical and there are many examples drawn from his own life as well as from his counselling practice.

Assessment: Generally the book is good. I found the section on guilt to be the most helpful and sound, though his examples seem terribly superficial. There is a good emphasis on relating emotions to reason and will. He does less well with anger, on the one hand acknowledging the "OKness" of feeling angry but on the other hand pulling back on perfectly legitimate expressions of anger. A common dilemma for Christians, and Dr. Dobson does not help us very much.

Dr. Dobson would have made his book even more valuable if he had included sexual feelings in his list of emotions.

10. Hide or Seek: How to Build Self-Esteem in Your Child by Dr. James Dobson; Fleming H. Revell, 1980/G.R. Welch. Reviewed in the 1980 Fall Book Issue.

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Books

A Christian approach to sociology

A Reader in Sociology: Christian Perspectives; edited by Charles P. De Santo, Calvin Redekop, and William L. Smith-Hinds; Herald Press, Kitchener, ON, 1980; pb., 736 pp., \$15.00. Reviewed by Theodore Plantinga, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College.

Christians, especially in the Reformed camp, have made much of the importance of an integrally Christian approach to the sciences. In some fields, however, disappointingly little has been accomplished. One such field is sociology. Therefore, this thick collection of readings is a very welcome addition to the literature on Christianity and sociology.

The contributors come from diverse backgrounds. Hence one must not look for a unified approach coming through in the book.

A Reader takes both a theoretical and a topical approach to the integration of Christianity and sociology, and this is as it should

be. In other words, what is needed is both a distinctively Christian theoretical framework of reference for sociology and a concern for certain issues and problems that are neglected or overlooked by secular sociologists.

Karl Marx has made a deep

impression on sociology as a science. Therefore, he draws considerable attention in the book. Another highlight is the essay by Richard Russell entitled "Philosophy and Sociology," in which a number of important philosophical issues are ably dealt with.

The book is well-suited for classroom use, for it includes discussion questions and many suggestions for further reading. I hope that more such books appear, books in which the areas that are only mapped out in this volume are explored at greater depth.

Psalms to study

Psalms: Songs of Life. A Group Bible Study by David and Sue Burnham; Moody Press, Chicago, 1980; 64 pp. Reviewed by W. Stanford Reid, Guelph, ON

Prepared by a husband and wife team who have both jointly and separately written and published a number of

works, this study guide is aimed at providing an understanding and application of the teachings which are provided by ten of the psalms. Directions are provided

at the beginning as to the best method of conducting a group Bible study. Then for each of the psalms chosen a series of questions is presented with space provided after each question for an answer. With each of the psalms there is also a study of a New Testament passage which deals with the same subject.

The psalms and New Testament passages are: Psalm 1:1-6 and James 1:22-25; Psalm 23 and John 10:9-18; Psalm 27 and 1 John 5:9; Psalm 34:1-22 and 1 Peter 1:3-21; Psalm 37:1-4 and Ephesians 4:21-32; Psalm 90:1-17 and 1 Corinthians 12:19, 51-57; Psalm 91:1-16 and Romans 8:28-34; Psalm 107:1-43 and 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Psalm 139: 1-24 and Acts 17:24-31; Psalm 147:1-20 and John 1:1-14. The lessons drawn are both biblical and practical.

This should be a useful little work for adult study groups.

GUIDE TO GOOD BOOKS No. 12

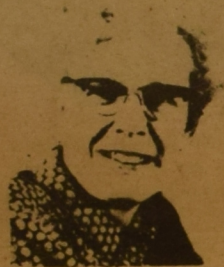
Watch for "Know Your Authors Contest" Jan. 9 issue

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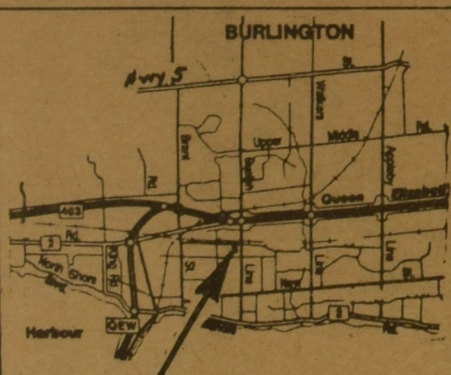
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On keeping up with the theological Joneses

In Rapport met de Tijd: 100 Jaar Theologie aan de Vrije Universiteit; by J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1980; pb., 279 pp., 29.50 Dutch guilders. Reviewed by Theodore Plantinga, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College.

This book is not quite what the title—or rather the subtitle—suggests. Yet, it does make clear that the Free University's theological faculty is eager to keep up with the Joneses, as it were; but the book is not a history of the University's theological faculty.

In Rapport was prepared to help celebrate the Free University's centennial in 1980. It is made up of essays by Free University professors. Some of the essays touch on the history of the theological faculty and deal with such figures as Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, and C. van Gelderen.

H.M. Kuiltert is one of the contributors. He takes up the ticklish question of the freedom of the theologian, a question which is central to the history and development of the Free University. There seem to be no easy answers to be had in this area.

